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Hafa Adai!

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Ex-CPA police chief pleads guilty

Former Commonwealth Ports Authority police chief Jordan Kosam hugs a family member outside the courtroom after a hearing yesterday afternoon in Superior Court. Kosam pleaded guilty to one count of misconduct in public office and was sentenced to one year imprisonment. Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja suspended the imposition of sentence. Kosam is set to fly back tomorrow, Friday, to Denver, Colorado, where he is now working.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

» Charges vs ex-CPA police captain Rebuenog dismissed

Former Commonwealth Ports Authority police chief Jordan Kosam entered a guilty plea while the charges against his co-defendant, former CPA police captain John T. Rebuenog, were dismissed yesterday.

The case stemmed from Kosam's and Rebuenog's alleged role in shielding then-attorney general Edward Buckingham from being served with penal summons in 2012.

Kosam pleaded guilty to misconduct in public office as part of a plea deal with the government.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja sentenced the 43-year-old Kosam to one year in prison but suspended the imposition of the sentence. Instead, he placed Kosam on three years of supervised release. If Kosam does not violate

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Low water production hits some CUC water reservoirs

» NWS warns of developing drought conditions in the Marianas

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

The water system of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has been plagued with a series of problems since December, ranging from significant leaks to low water production from the pumps to the tanks.

After the situation at the Calhoun reservoir and the loss of about a thousand-gallon per minute of water plus reduced water

See WATER on Page 4

'OAG intends to pursue trial vs former Rota mayor'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General moved to dismiss the charges of theft against former Rota mayor Melchor A. Mendiola and four other former Rota municipal employees because it intends to proceed against them on the possession or removal of government property charges.

Assistant attorney general Matthew C. Baisley said the filing of possession or removal of government property charges were not intended to prejudge or dictate the Superior Court's ruling on the government's pending motion to dismiss the case charging the defendants with theft.

Instead, Baisley said, the case charging the defendants with pos-

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President Barack Obama urges Americans to rekindle their belief in the promise of change.
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Local

January is Stalking and Human Trafficking Awareness Month

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph Torres and Lt. Gov. Victor Hocog declared January "Stalking and Human Trafficking Prevention Awareness Month" during a proclamation signing yesterday on Capital Hill.

The proclamation urges the raising of awareness of these heinous crimes—of exploited labor, sex, or stalking—against humanity, and rallies the community to reach out to victims, show support, and that help is available.

Black cutouts of silhouettes symbolizing the "silent victims among us" lined the walls of the Office of the Governor. The silhouettes will be displayed in hotel lobbies and brought to school as part of outreach efforts this month.

"These are our islands," Torres said in reading and signing the proclamation. "We will not allow fear in our community."

Torres told community members and advocates gathered at yesterday's signing event that "force, fraud, and coercion" should never be allowed, especially in a small island community where "we can really feel it, and see it."

Lawyer Pamela Brown, reading statements prepared by U.S. Attorney Alicia Limtiaco of Guam—who could not attend the event due to flight issues—said over 800 cases have been prosecuted by federal officials between 2009 and 2014.

All nations have a part to play in keeping the world safe and to build a future where perpetrators are brought to justice and no one denied is their rights, she said.

"It's about modern slave trading…in all its forms," said Brown.

Sr. Stella Mangona said a prayer for St. Josephine Bakhita, the saint for victims of human trafficking, who was born in Sudan, kidnapped, and sold and resold as a slave.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Ralph Torres and Lt. Gov. Victor Hocog pose for a photo with community advocates at a proclamation signing yesterday to declare January "Stalking and Human Trafficking Awareness Month."

According to the proclamation, human trafficking is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world, with nearly 27 million victims of sex slavery. Between 100,000 to 300,000 U.S. children are enslaved in sex trafficking each year. In the U.S., the average age of recruitment into sex slavery is 12 to 14 years old.

Approximately 20 percent of all Internet pornography involves children who are victims of human trafficking.

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Little movement on government construction manager for casino

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

The CNMI government is still working on securing a construction manager to jointly oversee Best Sunshine International Ltd.'s ambitious casino project, two months after a bid for the job closed.

Hiring this construction manager—as mandated in the 2014 agreement between the CNMI government and the casino that granted it its exclusive gaming license—appears to have fallen off the radar lately. The manager would add another layer of oversight to the sprawling casino project on top of the Coastal Resources Management board, a regulatory body made up different environmental, zoning, utility, and other local agencies.

According to a senior official close to the issue, the administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is looking to "jumpstart" the review process soon.

Saipan Tribune revealed last month that a bid closed in November for an architectural or engineering firm to serve as the Commonwealth's representative on the "Development Plan Advisory Committee," a working group made up of the engineering firm hired by the casino and a firm with integrated resort experience to represent the CNMI.

Only one firm submitted a bid, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

If selected, the firm would consult the CNMI governor and help steer the ambitious casino project, monitor the casino's development, and track how it meets project implementation schedules.

Among many others, Best Sunshine must meet requirements inclusive of 2,000 hotel guest rooms; 17,000 square meters of total gaming floor area; 13,532 square meters of food and beverage outlets; 15,000 square meters of retail space; a 600-seat theatre; 9,094 square meters of meeting space, including a ballroom; 200 villas; and a $100-million themed entertainment facility.

According to its exclusive casino licensing agreement, Best Sunshine must complete "Phase 1" of its casino project within 36 months of land acquisition..

DPAC is set have a three-member committee assigned to review the proposal: a licensed engineer from the Bureau of Environmental and Costal Quality, an engineer from Public Works or the Capital Improvement Office, and an engineer of the casino. DPAC was established to facilitate communication between the CNMI and the licensee, implement license requirements, and implement development schedule.

The committee is responsible for reviewing and advising on the design of the initial gaming facility and the integrated resort.

The CNMI's representative on the committee will report directly to the CNMI governor.

Guerreros appointed officially

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has formally appointed James Deleon Guerrero and Robert Guerrero to the positions of Special Assistant of Homeland Security and commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, respectively.

The two had been serving in acting capacities in the wake of the resignation of former Homeland Security special assistant Marvin Seman. Deleon Guerrero was previously the DPS commissioner, and Guerrero, the commissioner of the Department of Corrections.

The position for HSEM special assistant does not require Senate confirmation. The DPS commissioner will need confirmation.

"I am confident that you are qualified and will consistently devote your time and efforts to fulfill the vital responsibilities of this office and will be an asset to the Commonwealth," said Torres in the appointment letters. "Your willingness to serve our people is most appreciated."

Seman stepped down as HSEM chief last Dec. 7 for personal reasons after being instrumental in Typhoon Soudelor recovery efforts. He served as head of the agency

See GUERREROS on Page 4

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Public hearing set to rename the San Antonio Middle School

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

A public hearing has been set for Jan. 25 on a House bill to rename the San Antonio Middle School to "Francisco Mendiola Sablan Middle School."

The hearing will be held at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

House Bill 19-106, authored by Rep. Joseph Leepan Guerrero, seeks to rename the school to honor its first principal and his years of service in the education field.

Sablan served as principal from 1971 to 1975, and also served as a lawmaker in the Marianas Islands Legislative District.

"The Legislature finds that…Sablan's esteemed working career has benefitted the entire Commonwealth, most especially the residents and community of San Antonio Village," the bill states.

Rep. Felicidad Ogumoro, chairperson of the House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare, has requested the presence of CNMI Public School System, the San Antonio Middle School and its Parent Teacher Association, the mayor of Saipan, and the San Antonio Church parish.

Written comments are encouraged to be submitted three days prior to the hearing. They can be emailed to rep.ftogumoro@gmail.com

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PH mobile consular mission ongoing

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

Better processing of Philippine passport applications were observed this week at the mobile consular mission being held at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

The mobile mission this month, which started last Tuesday and will last until Friday, will only process passport applications as other documentations can now be coursed through honorary consul Glicerio Arago's office.

According to Consul Mark Hamoy of the Consulate General of the Philippines in Agana, Guam, all those who registered for applications showed up.

"So far we're 100 percent," Hamoy said.

The mobile mission is presently accommodating 100 applications per day.

Hamoy attributes the better processing through the tweaks that they made over the past year. From straight up walk-in applications to pre-encoded processing, they are now using a pre-scheduled but not pre-encoded system in accepting applications for passport renewals.

Although they were able to accommodate about 20 more applications when they were pre-encoding data, Hamoy said they had 25 to 30 percent "no show" applicants.

"At that time because we do pre-encoding, our system gets clogged by data," Hamoy said.

He also pointed out that their team stretched their hours from 9am to 7pm to accommodate 100 applicants each day even though they won't get paid overtime hours.

Slim chance

As only 400 slots were made available for the current mission, the need for more slots was still evident during the appointment scheduling done last Sunday.

According to Arago's office, over 300 more applications were received, already awaiting the next mission.

Arago said he is concerned about Filipinos who will need to have valid passports to renew their Commonwealth-only work permits, and many would need to renew by April.

It takes about two months after processing for the passports to arrive.

Arago said they will still push to have another mission soon, which would hopefully be next month. However, Hamoy said there is only a "slim chance" for that to happen.

The PCG-Guam also caters to other islands in the Pacific such as Palau where Filipinos are also present.

Hamoy said they are looking at middle of March for the next mission to happen as they try to schedule it every other month.

WATER

From Page 1

production at the Kannat Tabla tank last month, it's now the Puerto Rico and Rapagao reservoirs that are having problems with production.

CUC announced limited water service for some of Saipan's southern and western villages because of the low water levels in the Puerto Rico reservoir

"We lost production from wells," CUC Water and Waste Water Department chief engineer John Riegel said in an interview, noting that the supply couldn't keep up with the demand.

He said there's going to be limited water supply in the areas being service by the tanks for the next couple of days.

"We should be back to, more or less, normal in Puerto Rico by the end of the week," Riegel said.

In a press release, CUC said three wells that routinely pump water for the affected areas recently went offline, and the resulting drop in production hampered CUC's ability to fill the Rapagao and Puerto Rico reservoirs.

The utilities company said their repair crews were able to bring one of the wells back online yesterday afternoon and will address the two remaining wells this morning.

CUC said customers in Garapan between Micro Beach Road and Orchid Street will receive water from 6am to 10am. Customers between Orchid Street and Garapan Street will receive water service from 10am to 2pm, while customers between Garapan Street and Gualo Rai Road will receive water service from 2pm to 6pm.

"In the south, customers in the Obyan area will also continue to receive limited service from 6am to 12pm as water personnel continue searching for suspected leaks in the main distribution lines that service the area," CUC added.

Riegel noted that what happened to the Puerto Rico reservoir was identical to the problem encountered in Kannat Tabla—which although is now able to produce sufficient water for its service areas, repairs and replacement of some equipment are still needed.

"It's the problem we have, we get one area fixed and then something breaks in another," Riegel said.

There are about 140 water wells all around Saipan.

"Usually a well pump that is running as much as hours, you can get maybe five years average. But our water is more corrosive. Sometimes we need to replace them in just three years," Riegel said.

Possible drought

Water system issues being aggravated by low water production could soon become a concern since the National Weather Service observed a very dry weather developing across the Mariana Islands.

According to a statement from NWS Guam, rainfall across the Marianas has been significantly below normal since November of last year and is expected to be below normal during the next several months.

"Computer models indicate rainfall of only a quarter inch to a half inch for the Mariana Islands through the next 10 days, and very low rainfall will likely persist through the next several months," NWS said.

Currently, there is a drought statement in effect for Yap, the Republic of Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. NWS said will likely be expanded to include the Mariana Islands in the coming weeks.

NWS said that dry weather and drought conditions across most of Micronesia are often associated with the latter phases of historically strong El Niño patterns. The El Niño pattern currently across the western north Pacific is expected to persist through the first half of 2016.

Already, NWS advised the public to be mindful of water usage.

"Water supplies will need to be monitored and water conservation is encouraged—especially for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Grass fires have already been observed in Guam and the risk of grass fires will increase in the coming weeks. Home owners should keep grass and brush trimmed far away from houses and other structures. Some damage to food crops could also develop," NWS said.

Continued efforts

In a prior interview, acting CUC executive director Gary Camacho said they encourage the public to use water efficiently.

"We encourage people to use water efficiently and report leaks to the call center. We can only do this together as a team with the community to try to care for our essential resources which is water," Camacho said, adding that call centers are always ready to receive reports of leaks.

He added that CUC is making efforts to improve the water service.

"CUC will continue its current effort to address some of the damage to the system and also try to upgrade certain areas to try to get back to more reliable water service," Camacho said.

"With the Water Task Force being incorporated to the CUC program now, we anticipate that there will be a better and more prepared group of people capable of making the necessary repairs to better our service to the community," he added.

EX-CPA

From Page 1

any terms of his supervised release, the one-year prison term will be vacated.

Kosam was ordered to pay a $1,000 fine, $300 in probation fee, and $25 in court costs. Kosam agreed to apply the $500 bail that he posted to the probation fee, court costs, and fine. This leaves him with only $825 to pay.

Kosam will be prohibited from being employed with the CNMI government for 10 years.

"No one is above the law. No one," Naraja told the defendant.

Before the sentence was handed down, Kosam apologized to the court and the community.

In an interview after the hearing yesterday, special prosecutor George Hasselback said he and attorney Joaquin Torres, counsel for Kosam, worked very closely on this plea agreement and that he believes that Kosam has genuinely apologized for his actions on Aug. 3 and 4, 2012.

"I think he's taking responsibility for those actions," he said.

Hasselback said Kosam understands that the one-year sentence can come back should he violate the terms of his probation.

"I think that's fair resolution. And we're happy with it," he said.

On the dismissal of Rebuenog's case, Hasselback said they moved to dismiss the charges. He said among the factors in moving to dismiss are judicial economy, the resources of the prosecution, and available evidence.

The government, through Hasselback, filed the case against Kosam in May 2013.

The information charged Kosam with, among others, theft of services, obstructing justice, interference with a law enforcement officer or witness, tampering with judicial records or process, and eight counts of misconduct in public office.

As part of the plea agreement, the remaining charges were dismissed.

According to the factual basis of the plea agreement, on the night of Aug. 3, 2012, and the morning of Aug. 4, 2012, Kosam, as a "police officer," had a duty to promptly make diligent effort to execute or serve any and all process in any criminal proceeding.

However, despite having actual knowledge of the existence of a penal summons issued by the Superior Court and having actual knowledge of the person upon whom that summons was to be served, he did not make diligent effort to serve it either personally or through another police officer.

Then-attorney general Buckingham was the subject of the penal summons.

Meanwhile, Associate Judge David A. Wiseman dismissed without prejudice yesterday the charges against 36-year-old Rebuenog.

Wiseman dismissed the charges against Rebuenog after Hasselback moved to drop the charges.

With Kosam's guilty plea and the dismissal of the charges against Rebuenog, it means that only former Department of Public Safety deputy commissioner Ambrosio T. Ogumoro remains a defendant in this case.

The trial of Ogumoro will start on Jan. 19, 2016.

Ogumoro is facing 15 counts of criminal charges.

The charges against three other co-defendants were already resolved. Former governor Benigno R. Fitial pleaded guilty, while Buckingham was convicted during a bench trial. The charges against Fitial's former personal driver and bodyguard Jermaine Joseph W. Nekaifes were dismissed.

OAG

From Page 1

session or removal of government property were filed based on the government's belief, and the Superior Court's order, that the possession or removal charges are separate and distinct from the theft charges at issue.

In addition, the prosecutor said, the government intends to move forward with the charges of possession or removal of government property, rather than the theft charges at issue.

Baisley explained the government's strategy in the case against Mendiola and co-defendants in his response yesterday to Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho's order to show cause on Tuesday.

In his order to show cause, Camacho ordered Baisley to explain why the government filed on Tuesday the penal summons with attached information charging the defendants each with possession or removal of government property when the government filed on Monday a motion to dismiss the case charging the defendants with theft.

Camacho said the order to show cause hearing shall take place first before the court hears the motion to dismiss tomorrow, Friday, at 3:30pm.

In his response to the order to show cause, Baisley said that, as Camacho found, possession or removal of government property is a crime with "very different elements" from the crime of theft.

Accordingly, Baisley said, the government may charge defendants with possession or removal of government property, and that charge is unrelated to the pending charge of theft, as well as the pending motion to dismiss that charge.

In short, the prosecutor said, the government brought the charges of possession or removal of government property because it believes that the defendants are guilty of these charges.

Baisley said the government is free to file the separate and distinct possession and removal charges against the defendants.

The trial of Mendiola and co-defendants Stacey Atalig, Tina Atalig, Alfred Apatang, and Bernard Apatang will be on Rota on Jan. 25, 2016. The theft charges are for jury trial, while possession or removal charges are for bench trial.

GUERREROS

From Page 3

ever since the merger of the Emergency Management Office and Department of Homeland Security.

Deleon Guerrero, meanwhile, succeeded former police chief Ramon Mafnas at DPS. Brothers Aniceto and Ambrose Ogumoro actually alternated as police chiefs in acting capacities before Deleon Guerrero's appointment.

Deleon Guerrero is known for spearheading the campaign against illegal drugs, vowing to rid the islands of the menace of methamphetamine or "ice," resulting in several high-profile arrests of suspected "drug lords."

Guerrero, for his part, succeeded Mafnas, who for a time wore both commissioner hats of DOC and DPS. Guerrero is a former executive director of the election commission.

Man gets 5 years in prison for shooting another

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo handed down a five-year prison term against a man who shot and wounded another man with whom he had an argument a few days before the attack in Dandan.

In an order yesterday, Govendo sentenced Joseph William Barto to 10 years of imprisonment, all suspended except for five years, for assault with a dangerous weapon.

Barto was given credit for 141 days of time served. He was allowed to start serving his sentence on Feb. 15, 2016, at 8am.

After completing the prison term, Barto will be placed on supervised probation for five years. He was ordered to pay a $500 fine, $500 in probation fees, and $100 in court costs.

Barto was required to pay $3,529.85 in restitution to the victim, Stanley Laniyo, for the injuries he sustained.

Govendo also ordered Barto to undergo anger management counseling and complete any recommended treatment within six months of being released.

Barto pleaded guilty to assault with a dangerous weapon as part of a plea deal.

Chief Public Defender Douglas Hartig served as counsel for Barto, while acting chief prosecutor Chester Hinds represented the government.

According to police, Barto shot Laniyo with a firearm on Jan. 10, 2015. Laniyo was wounded on the left thumb and middle finger.

Police detective Jeffrey I. Norita stated in his report that a police officer who responded to the incident at 1:41am met with Laniyo, who was standing on the roadside.

Laniyo's left hand was covered with a bloodstained white towel. The victim told the officer that Barto shot him.

According to Laniyo, he was parking his vehicle at his driveway in Dandan when he saw Barto driving a car and making a U-turn.

Laniyo got down from his car and saw Barto roll down the driver's window and pointed a rifle at him.

Laniyo threw the coffee can he was holding at Barto and ran toward his house. Barto, however, fired four to five shots. Barto then sped off toward the main road. Laniyo called police.

Crime scene technician found a used .22 caliber shell case on the road near Laniyo's residence, police said.

Police learned that three days before the shooting, Barto went to Laniyo's residence to talk about drugs. Laniyo claimed that he told Barto to "get lost."

MHPC to have technical assistance training

The Mental Health Planning Council is arranging to have a technical assistance training next month.

In a meeting yesterday, council officers and members discussed the training that would improve services for mental health and substance abuse in the Commonwealth.

"We made a request through Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to get technical assistance to help improve services regarding mental health and substance abuse here in the CNMI," council secretary Gregory Borja said.

The council spoke via teleconference with Berni Grajek from Arizona who works for an organization contracted through SAMHSA to provide technical assistance to the Pacific jurisdiction such as Guam, Marshall Islands, Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia, according to Borja.

He said they are targeting to hold the training in February.

The council annually receives grants from SAMHSA through the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Community Guidance Center. Through that grant, they are mandated to look into the mental health services being provided in the CNMI.

"We receive block grants from SAMHSA that basically help for mental health and substance abuse," Borja said. "We're supposed to review and monitor the way the system operates here in the CNMI and then we advocate for folks that might need more services that are currently available." ***(Frauleine Villanueva-Dizon)***

Bordallo statement on State of the Union

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo issued the following statement regarding President Obama's final State of the Union address. She was joined by Mike Blas, former President of the Guam Society of America, who viewed the address from the House Gallery as Bordallo's guest.

"Tonight, President Obama delivered his final State of the Union, where he laid out the progress that has been made during his two terms in office as well as his vision for the future of our country. The President called on Congress, and the American people, to embrace our differences, look beyond immediate political gain, and work together to achieve a better future for our nation.

"Throughout his presidency, President Obama has been a firm advocate for the middle class and less fortunate. The policies that he has implemented, and continues to work to implement, have generated steady job growth to strengthen our economy, extended affordable health care to millions of Americans, slowed the pace of climate change, made education more accessible, expanded assistance to veterans, and reestablished American leadership among the international community. Despite these accomplishments, there is still much to be done, especially in addressing many of the longstanding issues impacting Guam and the U.S. territories. Unfortunately this Republic-controlled Congress has inhibited progress on several issues of national importance.

"President Obama has also brought a renewed focus on the Asia-Pacific region, especially for strengthening national security and economic opportunities. His Administration's rebalance to the region, including the realignment of Marines from Okinawa to Guam, highlights Guam's strategic importance in the region and our potential for being an economic link between Asia and the U.S. mainland. I look forward to continuing the progress that has been made during President Obama's presidency and to continuing to work with his Administration to address issues important to Guam and our community." ***(Office of the Delegate)***

Wine and tapas for a good cause

Whispering Palms School will be holding a fundraising event that will feature select wines and delicious appetizer pairings on Jan. 29 at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

The event will be held poolside from 6pm to 9pm at $30 per person.

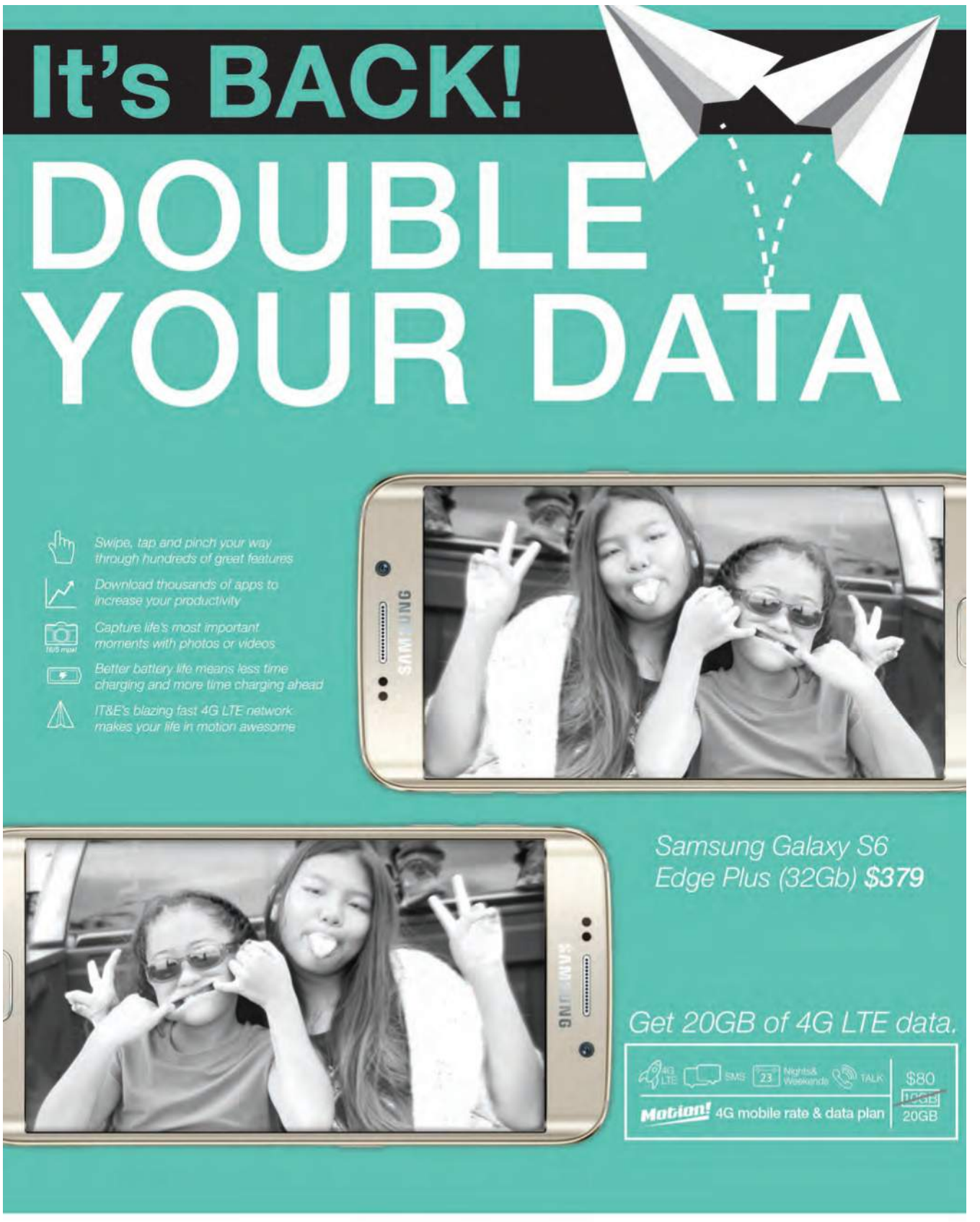
Live auctions, silent auctions, and raffle prizes will benefit the school's repairs from Typhoon Soudelor damage, as well as student and faculty needs.

One of the oldest private schools on island, Whispering Palms School currently serves students from Kindergarten to 8th grade. The school relies 100 percent on tuition, fundraising, and education tax credit donations.

School board member Kuen-Hee Han said the school has highly qualified staff that makes for a very engaged and educational environment for some of Saipan's youngest and brightest.

For this fundraiser, Pacific Trading Co. and the Hyatt Regency Saipan have partnered up as sponsors.

For tickets or more information on how you can help, call Whispering Palms School at 323-7451 or email whisperingpalmsofsaipan@gmail.com. ***(Daisy Demapan)***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Pohl trains students, counselors to 'rise up'

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

John Charles Pohl, executive producer of Teen Truth and Rising Up, is back on island to implement his new coaching program, RISING UP, for students and counselors in the CNMI Public School System this week.

According to Pohl, Rising Up is a peer-to-peer curriculum designed to teach students how to overcome adversity.

Pohl last visited the CNMI in 2011 and 2012 to present Teen Truth, a highly motivational assembly experience focused on topics such as bullying, drugs, and body image in response to the Columbine High School shooting.

"Our goal is to empower student voice in every aspect of education," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Pohl is hosting training workshops on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota and will be holding a wide assembly on Friday at the Marianas High School gymnasium—an effort spearheaded by CNMI PSS' Boni Pangelinan.

"The movement was designed to represent student voice, and to promote student-driven education initiatives," he said. "Our goal is to spark honest discussion about the current struggles that teenagers face."

Within both programs Pohl provides more specific of training in leadership as well.

"We help students, educators, and parents understand the most critical issues on campus, and create a plan of action to overcome those challenges," he added.

John Charles Pohl, center, executive producer of Teen Truth and Rising Up, poses for a photo with student leaders on Tinian this week during a training workshop. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Rising Up program Pohl is introducing this week extends the organization's efforts to build resilience and change the language around bullying, school pressures, and life challenges.

"Our work here in this visit is two-fold. First and foremost we are hear to help support the school counselors on the islands. Our goal is to provide them with a team of students that will extend guidance efforts around social and emotional issues," he said. "The second is to provide a leadership opportunity for students to mentor and support each other. The core message of RISING UP is to teach students the skills needed to overcome adversity and be resilient."

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NMHC IFB 2016-001 – Amendment #02

This ad is paid for with HUD funds.

Oleai Sports Complex Track and Field Renovation

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor Hocog, through the Northern Mariana Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, hereby give notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids from interested, licensed companies to provide Construction services for the **Renovation of the Oleai Sports Complex Track and Field** in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island.

Prospective Bidders or firms may pick up a set of the Project Package beginning **Wednesday, December 9, 2015** at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (07:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI and austerity holidays. Email of the Project package set will be allowed and a non-refundable payment is required. A non-refundable payment of **Fifty Dollars ($50.00) is required for each set**. Payment shall be by cash, credit card, money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

Bidders are also advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act. All wage rates for laborers, mechanics and all other employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid the current minimum wage or the wage determination for the Commonwealth as specified in CM130001 for the Mariana Islands.

A **mandatory pre-bid conference** will be held at **10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 06, 2016**, at the NMHC Conference Room in Garapan, Saipan. A project site visit will be made as part of the mandatory pre-bid conference for the prospective bidders to familiarize themselves with the required work. Attendance at this pre-bid conference and site visit are considered essential to the prospective bidders' understanding of the project elements and a prospective bidder or company that does not have a representative in attendance at the mandatory pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder.

All inquiries shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 or faxed to (670) 234-9410. Inquiries must be received no later than 4:30 p.m. local time, December 28, 2015

Sealed Bids must be marked **NMHC IFB 2016-001**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director, Procurement and Supply, Captiol Hill (Former EMO office), Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, Monday, February 1, 2016**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement of Supply no later than 10:00 a.m., local time, **February 1, 2016** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670)664-1515 or via email to procurement@pticom.com For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service no later than **Feb 1, 2016** and the ITB documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill (Former EMO Office) no later than **February 10, 2016.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill (former EMO Office), Saipan, at **10:00 a.m., local time, February 11, 2016**. However if no notice of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, the bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m., local time, February 1, 2016.**

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00), a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be in the form of a Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC), with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check. Surety companies must hold a Certificate of Authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference" is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations NMIAC Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with NMHC and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment Bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price. Pursuant to Governor's Directive 251 dated March 15, 2006, bidders are required to include a Clearance from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner with respect to the financial bonding capability of the bidders' chosen Surety.

Performance time for completion of this project is ***One Hundred Fifty (150) working days.*** Liquidated damages will be assessed at ***One Hundred Twenty Five Dollars (US$125.00) per working day*** for delays beyond the established completion date.

This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds provided to the commonwealth. This project is also subject to section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968, which requires recipients of HUD funds and the contractors to help ensure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the business that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible".

NMHC hereby notifies bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

All documents received shall be the sole property of the NMHC with the exception of the Bid Bond, Certified Check, or Cashier's Check, which will be returned to the proposers after the acceptance and award of contract to the successful contractor.

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any defects in the said proposals, if in the sole opinion of NMHC, to do so would be in its best interest. All proposals will become the property of the Government.

For information, contact Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director or Mr. Jacob Muna, Planner/Environmental Officer at (670) 234-6866/7689 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI and austerity holidays.

Edward C. Sablan
NMHC Board Chairman & Contracting Officer

Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

Kilili attends Obama's last State of the Union address

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) joined his colleagues in the U.S. Congress last night to witness President Barack Obama deliver his final State of the Union address. Sablan's guest for the President's speech was Angelo Villagomez of the Pew Memorial Trust Global Oceans Legacy program. Sablan issued this statement following the State of the Union:

"The people of the Northern Mariana Islands gave me the incredible opportunity to be a witness to history—to see our first African American President sworn in to office and now to hear him talk to America about the road we traveled over the last seven years and where we can go from here.

"In some ways the history of this President matches the recent history of the Northern Marianas. We, too, people of color, gained representation in our national government that we had never had before. We, too, had to struggle back from a great economic recession and today see a brighter future ahead.

"President Obama has been good for the people of the Northern Marianas. Even though I was just a freshman representative in 2009, the Obama administration treated the Northern Marianas as the equal of any other insular area when the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was drafted and passed. When health care reform legislation would have given the islands short shrift, it was President Obama who decided to add more money for our Medicaid program. I know. I was sitting right there at the table when he made the decision.

"The Obama administration used its executive authority in response to my call to help the poor by raising food stamp funding for the Marianas and energy assistance for our low-income households. The Obama administration eased us through the transition to federal immigration, using parole authority to keep families together and to keep our doors open to tourists from Russia and China.

"And the President wound down the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, so that our brave service men and women from the Northern Marianas would no more have to put their lives on the line in those distant lands.

"The President has also set the stage for a better future for Americans and for all the world's people by helping bring about the Paris agreement on climate change, which is an especially great danger to those of us on islands subject to typhoon and sea level rise. His negotiation of the Trans Pacific Partnership trade agreement will lift the economies of nations that surround the Marianas and of our region as a whole.

"As a son of the Pacific islands, President Obama knows in his bones that we have to work together, cooperate, find consensus, if we want to survive. That is the Pacific culture and creed. He said it tonight in words we know are true:

'The future we want—opportunity and security for our families, a rising standard of living, and a sustainable, peaceful planet for our kids—all that is within our reach. But it will only happen if we work together.'

"Those are words for all of us to remember from President Obama's final State of the Union address, and words for all of us in Congress to remember as we work to improve the lives of all Americans in this final year of the Obama presidency." ***(Office of the Delegate)***

Guam official lauds Ketungo' Chamorro show

Ketungo' Chamorro, a webisode project for the promotion, practice, and preservation of the Chamorro language, has received plaudits from the neighboring island of Guam.

According to Guam Lt. Gov. Ray Tenorio, Ketungo' Chamorro is essential to cultural preservation.

"I commend [producer and director Valentina Rivera's] efforts in perpetuating the Chamorro language. It is critical to support programs which promote learning the Chamorro language, as it is a vital piece of our culture throughout the Mariana Islands," he said.

This commendation came Sunday when Rivera announced the premiere for Ketungu Chamorro or "Let's Learn Chamorro" webisode on www.riverspictures.com.

Rivera later shared on her YouTube page that the premiere drew many viewers, maxing out the site's bandwidth.

"I used a video host that I thought would be sufficient for the show, but there were many users. Don't worry, I will move to the ever-friendly YouTube to have it be unlimited," she said.

The pilot episode was funded by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council and now relies on community and business sponsorship to continue its educational program for a 20-episode season.

For more information, contact riverspictures07@gmail.com. ***(Daisy Demapan)***

Commonwealth Cancer Association
AWARENESS•EDUCATION•HOPE

2016 CCA Board of Directors &
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTICE

The Commonwealth Cancer Association is inviting the community, cancer survivors, friends, and supporters to its annual general membership meeting on Thursday, January 21, 2016 at 5:30 PM at the CCA conference room in Gualo Rai.

The agenda will include the president's 2015 annual report as well as the treasurer's financial report. Immediately after the annual/financial reports, election of three (3) board members will commence. Nominations for board members will be accepted in advance via email and/or on the floor.

To submit a board nomination, or more information contact CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com

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Matua Riders play Santa to children, *man'amko*

The Matua Riders Group of Saipan, a non-profit organization that participates in charitable, educational, and social programs, did their Annual Christmas Spirit Bike Ride last month on Dec. 19, 2015. Over 150 children received gift bags filled with stuffed animals, school supplies, coloring books, juices, fruits, and candies.

Their first bike run was over at the Commonwealth Health Center's Pediatric Ward, spreading the Christmas spirit as they sang and walked the halls of the hospital with the 4D's Choir while handing out gift bags to the children who were admitted.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Matua Riders Group of Saipan delivers 75 fruit basket arrangements, two turkeys, and a check in the amount of $500 to the Man'Amko Center on Dec. 21, 2015.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Matua Riders Group of Saipan have their picture taken with the Christmas 4D's Choir at the Commonwealth Health Center on Dec. 19, 2015.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Matua Riders Group of Saipan present 25 gift bags to the Karidat Social Services on Dec. 21, 2015, intended for the children staying at the Guma' Esperansa.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Matua Riders Group of Saipan present gift bags to the children at the Garapan Annex (Upper MIHA).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Matua Riders Group hand out gift bags to children at Koblerville Estate on Dec. 21, 2015. Photo shows Matua Riders Group vice president Pete A. Leon Guerrero and MRG member Ivan Igitol.

Their next stop was at the Garapan Annex, also known as Upper MIHA, where the children flocked with excitement as soon as they heard the roaring sound of the bikes as the riders made their way to the designated parking area to hand out gifts.

The Matua Riders Group then made their way south to Koblerville Estate where they were again greeted with smiles, waving hands, and more happy children. One little boy, right after receiving his gift bag, shouted with joy, "Wow, there's candies, too!"

Karidat Social Services also received 25 gift bags from the group for the children staying at the Guma' Esperansa.

Also, on Dec. 21, 2015, the *man'amko* were presented with 75 fruit basket arrangements, two turkeys, and a check in the amount of $500 from the group.

The groups' mission would not have been possible without the generous support of individuals and private businesses. The members of the Matua Riders Group are sincerely grateful and wishes everyone a happy new year! ***(MRG)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Matua Riders Group president Edward A. Flores, his wife Jovita C. Flores, and MRG vice president Pete A. Leon Guerrero hand out gifts to children at the Koblerville Estate.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Matua Riders Group vice president Pete A. Leon Guerrero presents a check for $500 to the *man'amko*.

Kia'aina meets new leaders of CNMI, Marshall Islands

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Assistant Secretary Esther Kia'aina traveled this week to visit the leadership of both the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

In the Northern Mariana Islands, Kia'aina attended the official funeral services for the late CNMI governor Eloy Songao Inos, following which she will then met with the recently sworn-in governor of the CNMI, Ralph Deleon Guerrero, and Lt. Gov. Victor Borja Hocog. The former lieutenant governor and former CNMI Senate President were sworn in on Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2015, as the new governor and lieutenant governor, respectively.

While in the Northern Mariana Islands, Kia'aina also met with Senate President Francisco Manglona Borja, outgoing Speaker of the House Joseph Pinaula Deleon Guerrero, and incoming Speaker of the House Ralph Sablan Demapan.

The Assistant Secretary travels next to the Marshall Islands to meet with the newly inaugurated President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Casten Nemra, who was voted in by the newly-elected members of the *Nitijela* (parliament) of the republic. Nikolao Pula, Director of the Office of Insular Affairs will accompany the Assistant Secretary on this visit.

The Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas carries out the administrative responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior in coordinating federal policy for the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the CNMI. ***(OIA)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Xavier High entrance exam on Jan. 16

Attention parents of 8th graders: If your child is interested or you want your child to attend Xavier High School in Weno, Chuuk, please note that the Xavier High School Entrance Exam is scheduled for Saturday, Jan 16, 2016, at 9am at Mt. Carmel School. Your child will need to bring No. 2 pencils and $5 test taking fee. For questions, contact Ivan A. Blanco at ialafanso@gmail.com or 285 8768. ***(PR)***

CCA general membership meeting set

The Commonwealth Cancer Association is inviting the community, cancer survivors, friends, and supporters to its annual general membership meeting on Thursday, Jan. 21, 2016, at 5:30pm at the CCA conference room in Gualo Rai. The agenda will include the president's 2015 annual report as well as the treasurer's financial report. There will also be an election of three board members. Nominations for board members will be accepted in advance via email and/or on the floor. To submit a board nomination or for more information, contact CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com. ***(CCA)***

Survivors, caregivers support meeting on Thursday

All people facing cancer, their family members, and caregivers are invited to the next Commonwealth Cancer Association monthly support meeting scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 14, 2016, starting at 5:30pm at the Chamolinian Room of the Hyatt Regency Saipan. Guest speaker will be Dr. Tiffany Lin, department chair of Pediatrics/UCSF Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Fellow, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. She will facilitate a roundtable discussion on "how to give your past medical history to your doctor," as well as the key points that are important for survivors, and caregivers to know about the disease. To RSVP or for more information, call the CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com or cca@ccamarianas.org. ***(CCA)***

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

Position Title: Hospitality Administrative Specialist (Chinese Marketing)

Position Summary:
The Hospitality Administrative Specialist (Chinese Marketing) works with all aspects of administrative management, budget management, operational strategizing, contracts, financials, directory maintenance, logistics, purchasing, equipment inventory and storage.

Salary: USD 32,830 – USD 52,870 **Number of openings: 3**

Duties:
Arranges schedules of meetings, creates spreadsheets and presentations, accounting and financial reports, interprets and translates reports between English and Mandarin. Establish and implement departmental policies, goals, objectives and procedures, conferring with board members, organization officials and staff members as necessary. Review financial statements, sales and activity reports, and other performance data to measure productivity goal achievement and to determine areas needing cost reduction and project improvement. Monitor businesses and agencies to ensure that they efficiently and effectively provide needed services all staying within budgetary limits. Schedule meetings, interviews, events and other similar activities. Prepares and finalizes business correspondence (often using word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation computer software). Supports recruiting in the sales process and assists in the identification of new business. Frequently visits existing and potential customers. Ensures a positive customer service perception and reinforces a value added proposition to customers. Ensures self and team are capturing and cultivating customer loyalty. Ensure all new hires are properly onboarded after hire, including appropriate training. Partner with the Human Resources Department when needed to work through challenging conflicts. Creates, coordinates and implements plans to achieve week overweek sales growth. Manage inventory of assets and supplies, and receive reports of stocks and supplies from assistants. Coordinate between departments and operating units in resolving daily administrative and operational problems. Answer phone calls and direct calls to appropriate parties or take messages. Attend meetings to record minutes. Greet visitors and determine whether they should be given access to specific individuals. Read and analyze incoming memos, submissions, and reports to determine their significance and plan their distribution. File and retrieve corporate documents, records, and reports. Open, sort, and distribute incoming correspondence, including faxes and email. Prepare responses to correspondence containing routine inquiries. Manage and maintain executives schedules.

Qualifications:
Associate's degree or equivalent work experience. Minimum of three (3) or more years of experience in clerical or document handling, minimum of two (2) years in accounting work or education. Hospitality Management, Business Administration/Management, Commerce, Accounting, Hotel Management background is preferred. Ability to read, analyze, and interpret documents, such as policy procedure manuals, and other related documents. Able to communicate effectively in English and Mandarin (Written/Spoken).

To apply for this position, you are required to email your detailed resume to recruitment@bestsunshine.co or drop off an application to the Best Sunshine Office located on the 3rd floor of the Bank of Guam building in Garapan.

Closing date: January 16, 2016

WANTED

NEWS REPORTER

The *Saipan Tribune* is looking for a FULL-TIME news reporter.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Above average writing skills and can work within deadlines;
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- Computer literate;
- With photography skills;
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If you have what it takes to be part of a dynamic team, email your résumé and samples of your work to editor@saipantribune.com. You may also drop it off at the *Saipan Tribune* office on the second floor of the JP Center Building on Beach Road, Garapan. ON-ISLAND HIRES PREFERRED.

Saipan Tribune, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer.
Qualified women, minorities, and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

Northern Marianas Humanities Council
Navigating the Human Experience

Vacancy Announcement

Board of Directors
Northern Marianas Humanities Council

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council (Council) wishes to announce a vacancy on its board of directors.

The Council is a non-profit private corporation affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Council's mission is to "foster awareness, understanding and appreciation of the humanities through support of educational programs that relate the humanities to the indigenous cultures and to the intellectual needs and interests of the people of the Commonwealth."

The Council's board is comprised of thirteen volunteer members who serve three year terms. The Council strives to maintain a board that reflects a broad cross section of our CNMI community. The ideal candidate will have a strong desire to promote the Council's mission, programs, and activities and to actively participate in fundraising activities. Board responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attending regular Council meetings four times annually;
- Raising funds for Council programs;
- Recruiting community partners;
- Promoting awareness about the Council's mission and its programs in the community;
- Attending Council programs and activities;
- Participating in working committee meetings;
- Evaluating Council programs and activities;
- Reviewing grant applications;
- Providing input about the humanities from various community members, and
- Attending conferences, workshops and other meetings on behalf of the Council.

Applicants are invited to submit their letters of interest and resumes to **Robert H. Hunter, Chair, Northern Marianas Humanities Council at Post Office Box 506437 Saipan, MP 96950** or delivered to the Council's office located in the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai, Saipan. All letters of interest and resumes must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, **January 29, 2016.** For additional information, please contact the Council's Executive Director, Scott Russell, at telephone 235-4785 or visit the Council's website at www.northernmarianashumanities.org.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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MEMBER

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EDITORIAL

Rolling Stone's scoop comes at too high a price

It's hard to argue with any process that led to the capture—recapture, that is—of a billionaire drug lord who has the blood of thousands on his hands. The fact that Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman is back behind bars, possibly because an actor-playing-journalist led police to his hideout, is an essential first step toward reversing Mexico's tattered reputation for lawlessness and rampant criminality.

Guzman, a two-time prison escapee, openly mocks the concept of Mexican justice. It's time for Mexico to swallow its pride and accede to U.S. extradition requests instead of allowing him to continue bribing his way to freedom.

Actor Sean Penn did the quest for justice no favors by employing elaborate evasion techniques to elude authorities and conduct a seven-hour interview with Guzman. Rolling Stone magazine, which published the interview Saturday, deserves public scorn and outrage for contributing to Guzman's aggrandizement.

Rolling Stone made a deal with the devil. Editors granted Guzman the right to review and approve the 10,000-word article before it went to press. Reputable journalists simply do not cross this inviolable line, regardless of the justification. The public's trust is paramount, and readers everywhere must know that they're receiving an accurate and truthful account of news events.

Of course, Guzman—along with President Barack Obama, Russian President Vladimir Putin and the leader of the Islamic State—would love to have the right to review their quotes and characterizations before articles are published. But the game simply does not and must not work that way.

If Penn wants to play journalist, that's his business. He might consider a few college journalism courses first, particularly one devoted to journalism ethics.

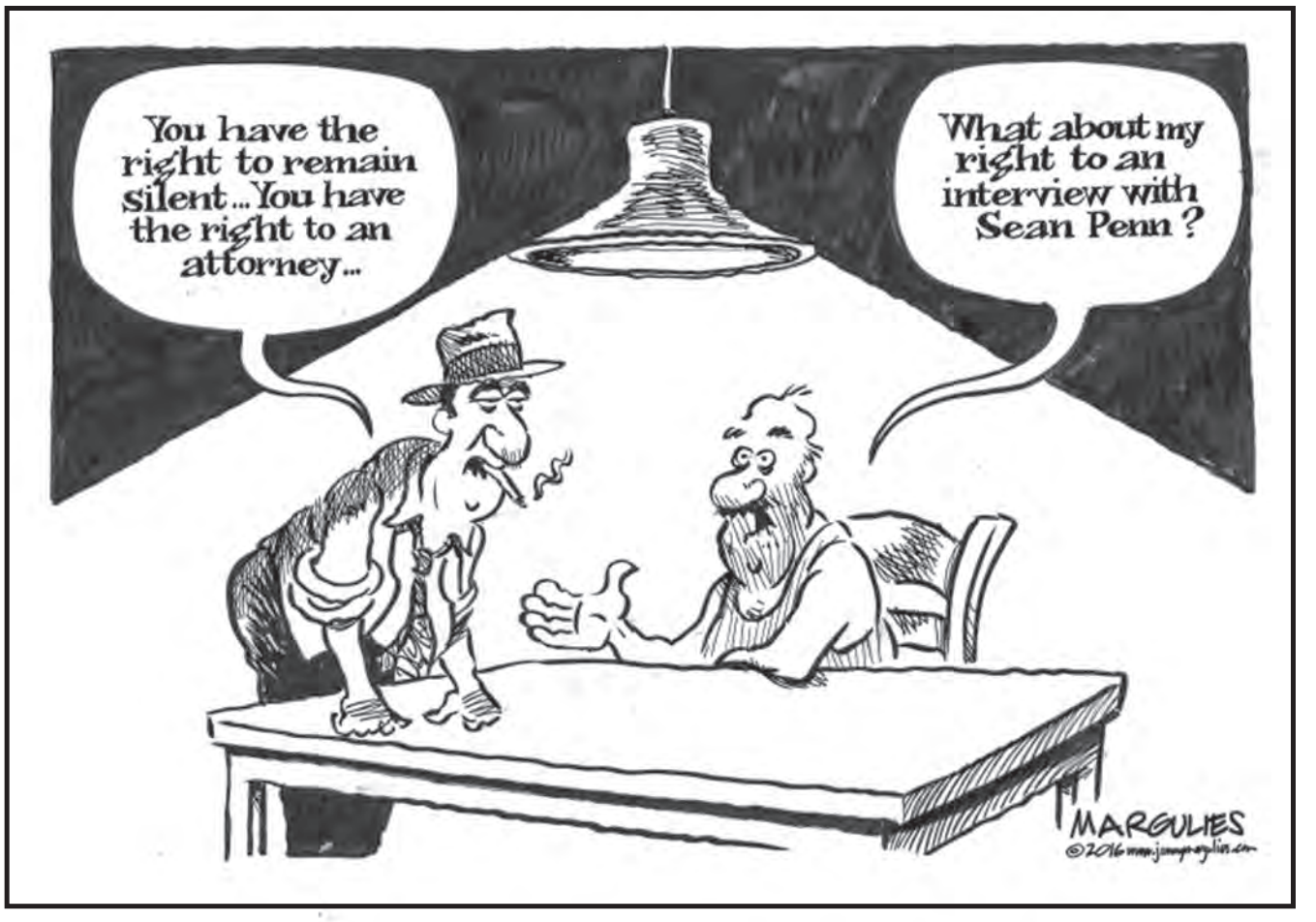
Penn writes that Mexico has "two presidents"—the elected one, Enrique Pena Nieto, and Guzman, the criminal who rules the Mexican countryside by terror. Penn likens him to Robin Hood. The actor offers a few short sentences acknowledging the 27,000 deaths from the war between Guzman's Sinaloa cartel and rival groups to control Mexico's northern smuggling routes into the United States.

The writer also chides Americans for providing the drug demand and dollars that feed cartel violence. But he is shockingly uncritical of Guzman, describing him as a "simple man from a simple place" and a doting father who avoids alcohol and never uses the poison he pushes.

Since neither Penn nor *Rolling Stone* wanted to upset their interview subject with overly harsh words, perhaps we should do it for them: Joaquin Guzman is a mass murderer who would not hesitate to behead law enforcement officers, torture journalists and use vats of acid to "disappear" anyone who interferes with his insatiable quest for enrichment. This "simple man" would gladly destroy children's lives and invoke Mafia-style rule if given the opportunity.

Penn's sympathetic appraisal recalls his support in previous years of the late Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chavez. Real journalists don't downplay ugly and inconvenient facts. He and *Rolling Stone* were played, and paid too high a price to secure a sensational, exclusive interview.

(c)2016 *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*


You have the right to remain silent... You have the right to an attorney...
What about my right to an interview with Sean Penn?
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Smoke-free nearly 30 years on

By SALLY FRIEDMAN
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

I smoked my first forbidden cigarette at a high school sorority meeting. I choked and gagged but pushed on.

Why?

Because I so wanted to be cool. Because I was a 15-year-old who had been exposed to endless images of movie stars smoking, looking glamorous and sophisticated. I wanted that badly.

I was short, hated my hair and yearned to look older. Those foul-tasting cigarettes seemed the perfect answer.

But not foul-tasting for long.

I loved smoking. I smoked in my classes in college, and so did the professors. Absolutely permitted.

I smoked during three pregnancies—and so did my obstetrician. I know, unthinkable!

All of this came back to me recently when, through a chance conversation with a lovely woman, ironically in a medical office, we somehow got on the subject of quitting smoking. It was something I did 28 years ago (who's counting) and it was one of the toughest struggles of my life. If you think that's an exaggeration, then you're probably lucky enough to be a nonsmoker.

It turned out that Barbara's husband had quit smoking at almost the same exact time, and in the process, also had given up coffee and had started a fitness program, too. I was dazzled.

It had been so long since I'd thought about that chapter of my life, and so long since I'd talked to a fellow quitter. So on a total whim, I asked this semi-stranger whether she thought her husband might be willing to talk to me about our mutual experience.

Perhaps it was subliminally tied to this time of year, when resolutions float in the air we breathe, and all of us who have a habit we want to ditch believe that this time we'll really do it.

With his total permission, I introduce my new friend (though we've never met) and my smoking doppelganger, Darrell Hammons.

Turns out that we are neighbors who happened to quit smoking in the same year—and who both did it the hard way: cold turkey.

By the time I actually picked up the phone and called Darrell, his wife may have told him that a woman—whom she may have described as loony but not dangerous—wanted to talk about quitting smoking.

Darrell, a retired supervisor with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, turned out to be a wonderful guy who also was interested in sharing our giant leap away from tobacco.

For ex-smokers, there is common ground impossible to describe to anyone who isn't.

You've been through guilt and shame, remembered pleasure and the intense pain of withdrawal. You've been through the humiliation of being separated from the rest of mankind in segregated areas of the workplace or restaurants—or outside in the rain.

You surely know the boot-camp experience of feeling shaky and sad, starving and lonely, without your nicotine buddy, and, yes, downright scared.

For Darrell, the decision to quit was unexpected, unplanned, unannounced—and ultimately a triumph.

"I had smoked my last cigarette," he told me, "and even though I had another pack in my desk drawer, I decided not to open it."

Why that day? That moment? He may never know. He can only explain that, for him, it had to happen without a declaration, a plan or a pledge of any sort. "It was just a question of could I go for an hour, or two, or more," he remembers.

It turned out to be for the rest of his life.

Darrell surrendered his beloved coffee because it was, of course, a trigger. And he started to take long walks—and then to run—but only after he had gained 50 pounds as a nonsmoker. Almost all of it is still off.

We could laugh together, two strangers, about that crazy time when food suddenly just tastes so good that you have to stuff it in.

My story is a bit different.

I'd stopped smoking once before and then had stayed a nonsmoker for two years—until I made the fateful decision to have just a puff of a cigarette at a holiday party. That same night I went to a convenience store, bought a pack, and the monkey was again on my back. The shame and guilt were overwhelming.

My daughters ganged up on me. My wise husband didn't, but I knew just how he felt.

And then, on the cusp of a milestone birthday, I made a public pledge to my family that I was quitting.

I felt terribly sorry for myself. I acted like a whiny brat for the first horrible week. I also was weepy and convinced that, even as a long-established writer, I'd never be able to write another word. And I'd gain so much weight that I would never want to be seen.

I was wrong on all counts.

I gained a little weight, but vanity kept me from piling on the pounds. I wrote and wrote, lost in a new clarity that I couldn't understand or explain.

And here I am, a former smoker who can underline that key word—"former"—on those medical forms we so often need to fill out.

I have the utmost understanding for people in the throes of wanting to be rid of this habit but who are still lighting up.

I don't condemn them. I don't judge them.

But how I hope that, when the time is right, they'll do it. They'll kick the butt.

And somewhere out there, my new friend Darrell and I will be cheering you on.

Sally Friedman is a writer in Moorestown, N.J. She wrote this for The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Sensuran Offisiat Publiku

Pa`gu na sakan eleksion lehislatura. Deste pa`gu ta tutuhon umebalua haf` bidan niha para uma-adelanta kualidat linala` publiku piot gi bandan sueddu.

Oppan gi gaseta siha makontran disision publiko pot casino. Haf` i motibu na taya` respetu gi disision i tautau gi este na asuntu? Na tita chule` i asuntu ginen siha pot dos besis sa` taya` inañgoko-ta gi disposision niha?

Todu malago`ña i kompania ni muna` fan lamlam fasun niha ha chule` sin ditension. Estague` fumañagu nuebu na grupu entalu` siha yan i tautau siha gi señgsoñg. Machanda fitme siha na areglu sa` "hame mangai salape, pues hame lamon ni todu areglu".

Uttimoña ti siña esta makomprende chinatsagan i tautau sa` man-mikepble ya nina` fan bachet. Man-malefa ni marepresesenta sa` man-mañoda` amun niha ni mikepble. Lastima!

Buente ti mahasñgon lau manginacha` induktu yan minamahlau. Lau siha i manmikepble na biahe mienstras i publiku mas mafondu gi halom sisonyan te`ug na pinepble yan pinadese. Olara mohon ya in` hahassu este na pinadese gi oran botasion na sakan.

Maliñgu sensian hinimidde yan integredat gi kareran destrosiun offisiun niha. Siha fumatinas este na disision. Taya` manesessita disision publiku para umana` offsiat manmalagnos niha sin ditension na sakan.

Inadahen Hanom

Humalom i kliman En Niño na semana. Guiya este i tiempun maipe yan añglu`. Anaku` na tiempu este na mattiru ya mauleg in` tutuhon umadahe todu usun hanom sinaga. Mauleg na tostus para u na`yan hit este na matklima. Hu a`atan na siempre kontodu usun hanom grifu gi señgsoñg siha u fan mahuchom bes enkuando pot para umasaguaniye i tañke siha. Adahe finagten miyu hanom sinaga.

Pisun Natibu

Gi todu kinalamten, petsonat pat linahyan, manotohge hit gi fitme na pisun kuttura-ta mientras ta esgagaihon timon galaide`-ta. Ta fana` chubasku, pagyu, yan linau gi anaku` na karera deste tutuhon. Ni unu sumeha kau katma pat mattiempu. Rason? Manmau`udai hit gi fitme na sahyan natibu: kuttura.

Deste antes tali`e finattu yan hinanau tinilaika siha. Kontodu kabayeru yan manma`gas relihion manhanau gi minachom atdau. Todu este siha na tinilaika lau gagaige ha` i kuttura-ta intaktu `nai takahlañg inañgugho-ta. Deste bisguelu yan mañaina-ta un` tiempu manhihita dispues manhanau `nai manmadispone. I sustansian achon natibu ni ma-impatta giya hita ginen kutturan natibu hita dispues chumahlau.

Huñgan u guaha siha tinilaika lau i metgot na kutturan natibu u tunog gi todu hinerasion. Estague` `nai gaige i fitme na pisu yan haligen tautau-ta: kuttura yan tradision.

Pot Chaleg:

Guaha ta fagcha`e nuebu na moda siha gi sisienta na sakan. Unu i sapatos bossa nova yan botas Beatles. Kumu un` u`usa unu gi dos hagu i paire. Adahe botas Beatles bidaña gi un` amighu. Mayute` pot ayu ha` guinahaña i sapatos magagu—tennis shoes. Era mattu un` tautau Guam ni sinapapatos botas Beatles. Magpu` todu i nobena sin matucha.

Dispues humalom i nuebu siha na baila tat kumu twist, surf yan chacha. Ke de hemunos kau "F" gradu-mu gi social studies kumu paire hau bumailan twist, hagu i prinsesan eskuela. Adahe, kontodu tatten komun sanhiyuñg `nai hu praktes-yu` twist. Hu sufa` i troñkun choda para bai` na lagse` yeñgyoñg liliku`. Piot `nai in` li`e si Chubby Checker. Dios tiampare!

Hombre, pa`gu man-e`eyag famaguon natibu modetnu siha na moda. Ha katsa siha kadu` prefektu Amerikanun pau asu. Dios mihu!

■■■

Man-atminudu i mañelu ya mafahan un` nobiyu para flitada yan totche. Dispues de machuñgat, todu mañaunau man-mamogse yan mapikan tilipas estake todu listu para umana lagu. Mañaña` na katne sa` nobiyu. Todu mana` fan mañage. Paire na dinaña man-afamauleg yan hihot na mañelu.

Dispues in` katdu i patas guaka estake mamatgan getmonña. Man-na`yan i amiguhu ya ha gulusune. Trenta minutos dispues mañila` labaniyun dinalag gi koyenturan dedigoña. Impirau para umakone` para i gima` sa` tiha susuñgun putiña. Che`chu` gulosu.

■■■

Mañgone` i bisinu hatdineru ya ha tutuhon mananom. Mauleg na tane`. Sumen magof-yu` `nai huli`e mankapuyo` flores-hu gi menan guma`. Guaha lokue` sinisu siha gi tinanom troñkun patma. Puede ti nina` fan añglu` ni hinalom tiempun maipe.

■■■

Guaha `nai tafagcha`e tai ganas hit chumochu. Sige ta aligau fina abreganas deste finadeni` inasnen tukon, kottidun pipinu, papaya yan napa`. Man-mauleg na abreganas ya cha`mu malelefa na abreganas. Gigon un` gulusune tinagam hau otru chetnot.

■■■

Dispues de misan matai, mana` guaha kumida gi gima` i gai che`chu`. Ayu `nai man-asoda` todu gi fina` amotsan oga`an.

■■■

Tihu komprende haf` i Chamorro na `an man-bisita gi ICU hafaisen papa` i kumeke matai, "Kau mamauleg ha`?" Pot dios!

■■■

Dispues `nai humuyuñg i bisita ha sañgane i familia, "Ta aksepta ha` sa`…" Ke lau magahet na umakonsutta hau yan i Saina na taiguenau fino`mu gi familia? Dios mihu!

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune.

Sexual assaults in Germany highlight the need of immigrants to assimilate

The polarized debate about the West's treatment of refugees from Syria and other war-torn regions in the Middle East has taken a nasty new turn with reports of a massive wave of sexual assaults on women in Germany on New Year's Eve. While details are murky, it appears the terrifying attacks, in which women near the Cologne train station were surrounded, groped and robbed, were perpetrated by a mob of men of North African and Middle Eastern background, including recent migrants.

To some, this validates dire warnings about an invasion of the West by dangerous foreigners and even Donald Trump's call to close our borders to Muslims. Others see the outcry as religious and racial bigotry.

The attacks in Cologne, and reports of similar sexual violence in European cities, shock the conscience. Further stoking passions, Cologne Mayor Henriette Reker advised women to adopt a "code of conduct" for protection. While safety tips are not "victim-blaming" and some of the mayor's advice was sensible—for instance, to alert the police if assaulted—the "code" included the absurd suggestion to keep at arm's length from strangers. Indeed, a female "code of conduct" to ward off sexual assault sounded like a slippery slope to the burqa.

No less disturbing was the response of some progressives, so intent on not blaming the "oppressed" as to turn into politically correct caricatures. The online magazine *Vice* ran a piece by two German feminists asserting that migrants are not the problem because "Germany's rape culture is deeply rooted in our collective psyche." Their examples include being hugged by drunken strangers or deliberately splashed with beer at Oktoberfests. But there's a world of difference between overly familiar tipplers at revelries where both women and men let down their inhibitions, and a hostile mob that treats women as prey.

In the left-wing British paper *The Guardian*, columnist Gaby Hinsliff suggested that deprived young migrant men may have been striking out in resentment at young women they see as privileged. Others suggested that we should blame all men instead of all migrants or Muslims. And financial commentator Frances Coppola speculated that the attacks were somehow engineered by anti-immigration forces.

Granted, the right has had its share of bizarre responses, exemplified by the Twitter hashtag #rapefugees. Centrist Christina Hoff Sommers, whose critiques of modern feminism have made her popular with many conservatives, drew some right-wing ire merely by tweeting that "to blame all Muslim immigrants or refugees is to be like gender warriors who blame all men."

Some right-wing commentators, including National Review's Andrew McCarthy, have claimed that the sexual assaults are a deliberate strategy of conquest—a "rape jihad"—comparable to the sexual enslavement of women by the Islamic State and sanctioned by the Quran.

There is zero evidence that the Cologne assailants were motivated by religious zealotry. However, it is a fact that in many societies with extreme patriarchal traditions, women in public places—particularly if they are "immodestly" dressed—are seen as fair game for sexual attacks. Religion and culture both play roles. There is no question that some migrants bring those attitudes with them.

Rejection of ethnic and religious bigotry is a hard-won Western value—as is gender equality. But if the West is to preserve the culture that makes those values possible, immigration must be combined with effective policies that require immigrants to respect the legal and moral codes of their new homes.

By CATHY YOUNG
Newsday

Cathy Young is a regular contributor to Reason *magazine and the website RealClearPolitics. This was written for* Newsday.

Volunteering: A fraying bond in American society

The state of the union in regard to volunteering, which typically rises during the holidays, is not strong. In September 2004, nearly 29 percent of adults volunteered, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In September 2014, just over 25 percent did so. Most of us chase our own bliss instead of volunteering to bless others.

The BLS began tracking volunteering only in 2002, but historical research indicates that the decade-long decline is only a continuation of a century-long trend. In September 1914, as great armies clashed in Europe, "little platoons" in the U.S. continued to persevere. They were continuing what Alexis de Tocqueville had called the biggest difference between the old world and the new: In America, people formed religious and civic associations in order to work together for public benefit, instead of growing government to serve this purpose.

The decline culminating in our recent decade-long drop began 85 years ago as the Depression cut into the time and money available for associations, just as needs grew. Instead of bulwarking volunteer groups, government offered a new deal: Pay your taxes to hire professionals, then stay home. Americans, forced to pay others for social services, became less likely to volunteer themselves. Today, those who take a second job to pay taxes have little time for volunteering.

The 2014 BLS numbers show that women volunteer at a rate 29 percent higher than men, but when more mothers move from part-time to full-time employment, volunteering declines. Married persons volunteer 49 percent more than the never-married, so as the latter category grows, volunteering declines. Those with children under age 18 volunteer 37 percent more than those without, so reduced volunteering accompanies childlessness.

Furthermore, the employed are more likely to volunteer than those not looking for work, so recent increases in the number of non-workers would seem to correlate with non-volunteering. Religious organizations are usually the most frequent recipients of volunteer hours, but if religious participation is declining, it is no surprise that volunteering also declines.

And yet, what goes down can go up. In 2002 and 2003, as 9/11 made Americans look beyond themselves and as some leaders urged "compassionate conservatism," the percentage of adults who volunteered jumped by 5 percent. That increase held for two years before the long decline began again. Furthermore, while the one-fourth of Americans who volunteer do so on the average of one hour per week, extreme volunteers fill out some nooks and crannies.

For example, retired Christians known as SOWERS, short for servants on wheels ever ready, drive their RVs around the country and volunteer for a month at a time at a variety of ministries, putting in three to six hours per day as carpenters, plumbers, tutors and painters. In the words of the organization's website, "there are opportunities for anyone of reasonably good health to contribute."

Such exceptional endeavors catch the attention of contemporary observers surveying America's social landscape. But the distinctive character of America's volunteer effort that de Tocqueville witnessed almost two centuries ago is much more difficult to discern today.

By MARVIN OLASKY
The Heritage Foundation

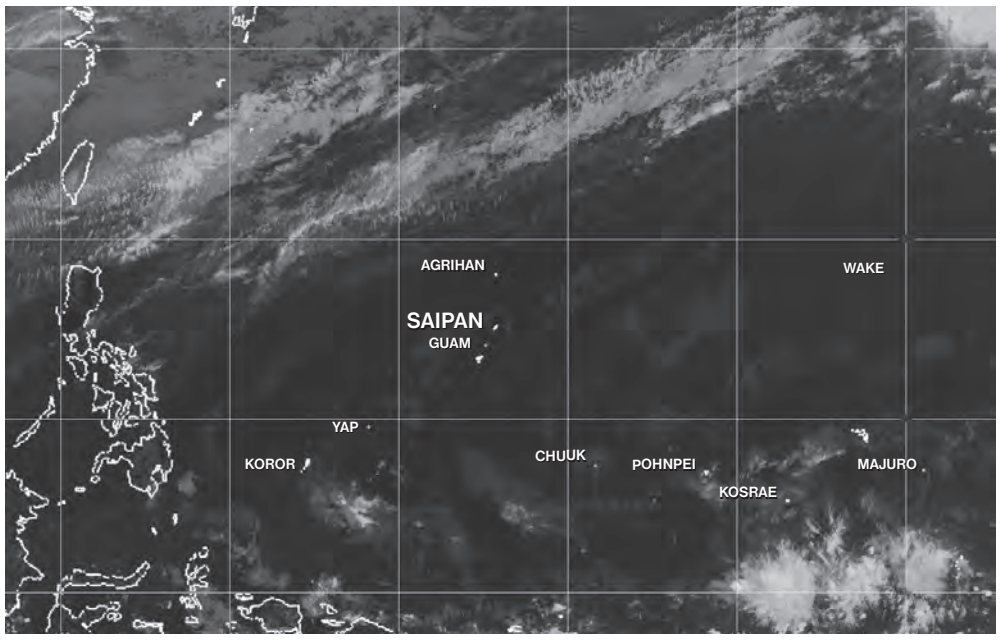
Marvin Olasky, a contributor to the Heritage Foundation's 2015 Index of Culture and Opportunity, is the editor in chief of World *and the author of* The Tragedy of American Compassion.

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 12:56 PM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2016
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwest through 25N153E to near 19N137E then continues as a shear line through 130E at 18N. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found near Iwo To Island and Minami Tori Shima along and up to 300 miles northwest of this boundary. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms southeast of Koror within 90 miles of a line from 7N135E to 3N143E southwest of Chuuk within 70 miles of a line from 7N145E to 4N149E and near Pohnpei and Kosrae within 50 miles of a line from 7N157E to 5N163E. A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from 1N160E through the date line at 1N. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are seen well south of Kosrae and Majuro south of a line from 2N160E to 3N173E to 2N180. Trade wind cloudiness and a few showers are seen just west of the Marianas within 120 miles of a line from 10N141E to 16N146E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲84	▼78
Palau	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲85	▼79
Pohnpei	Mostly Sunny	▲87	▼79
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼79
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼79

Around the Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲73	▼61
Beijing	Sunny	▲40	▼16
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲64	▼61
Honolulu	Sunny	▲82	▼70
London	Partly Cloudy	▲41	▼33
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲66	▼47
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲89	▼73
Melbourne	Showers	▲67	▼56
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	▲75	▼63
New York	Windy	▲31	▼24
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲48	▼36
Paris	Showers	▲45	▼34
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲46	▼29
Rome	Showers	▲58	▼54
Salem	Rain	▲48	▼39
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲57	▼46
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲34	▼23
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲52	▼35
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲32	▼25

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

4:31 AM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.2 Feet
11:17 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
5:24 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
10:24 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:05 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:06 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:06 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	9:52 AM	10:07 PM
Friday	10:39 AM	11:04 PM
Saturday	11:26 AM	
Sunday	12:13 PM	12:01 AM
Monday	1:01 PM	12:59 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 4, 2015

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	3, 5, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2924/183	4:15am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2924/183	4:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5038/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA5072/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2924/159	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

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DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

Oil keeps falling. And falling. How low can it go?

DALLAS (AP)—The price of oil keeps falling. And falling. And falling. It has to stop somewhere, right?

Even after trending down for a year and a half, U.S. crude has fallen another 17 percent since the start of the year and is now probing depths not seen since 2003.

All you can do is forecast direction, and the direction of price is still down," says Larry Goldstein of the Energy Policy Research Foundation, who predicted a decline in oil in 2014.

On Tuesday the price fell another 3 percent to $30.44 a barrel, its lowest level in 12 years. Oil had sold for roughly $100 a barrel for nearly four years before beginning to fall in the summer of 2014.

Many now say oil could drop into the $20 range.

The price of crude is down because global supplies are high at a time when demand for it is not growing very fast. The price decline, already more dramatic and long-lasting than most expected, deepened in recent days because economic turmoil in China is expected to cut the growth in demand for oil further.

Lower crude prices are leading to lower prices for gasoline, diesel, jet fuel and heating oil, giving drivers, shippers, and many businesses a big break on fuel costs. The national average retail price of gasoline is $1.96 a gallon.

On Tuesday the Energy Department lowered its expectations for crude oil and most fuels for this year and next. The department now expects U.S. crude to average $38.54 a barrel in 2016.

But layoffs across the oil industry are mounting, and oil company bankruptcies are expected to soar. BP announced layoffs of 4,000 workers on Tuesday. Fadel Gheit, an analyst at Oppenheimer & Co, says as many as half of the independent drilling companies working in U.S. shale fields could go bankrupt before oil prices stabilize.

AP
In this Thursday, July 16, 2015, photo, a woman fills her car at a Costco gas station in Robinson Township, Pa.

THERE'S LOTS OF OIL

A boom in U.S. oil production thanks to new drilling technology helped push global supplies higher in recent years. Other major oil producers and exporters in the Middle East and elsewhere have declined to reduce their own output in an attempt to push prices back up. Iran, trying to emerge from punishing economic sanctions, is looking to increase exports in the coming months, which could add further to global oil stockpiles.

The Energy Department said U.S. crude oil inventories "remain near levels not seen for this time of year in at least the last 80 years." It says global supplies exceed global demand by about 1 million barrels per day on average. Economists at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas believe excess inventories won't begin falling until 2017.

The higher supplies and lower prices haven't stimulated a sharp rise in demand. Most of the increase in world oil demand over the past several years has come from China, but signs are pointing to much slower economic growth there, which in turn reduces demand for fuels made from crude.

Disappointing reports last week about China's manufacturing sector and a fall in the yuan's value triggered a global stock sell-off and an even more dramatic decline in the price of oil and other commodities.

The first five days of the year marked the worst start of a year for oil in history, according to S&P Dow Jones Indices, and oil has only fallen further since.

WINNERS AND LOSERS

Motorists are saving every time they fill up. The Energy Information Administration figures that the average U.S. household saved $660 on gasoline in 2015 compared the year before, and gasoline is expected to fall another 16 percent in 2016. Tuesday the EIA forecast that gasoline will average $2.03 a gallon for 2016, the lowest since 2004, from $2.43 last year.

Airlines, big users of jet fuel, have posted record profits, and shippers and other businesses are also saving from cheaper energy.

But workers in the oil patch have paid the price. About 17,000 oil and gas workers in the U.S. lost their jobs in 2015, but if you include oilfield support jobs the number is about 87,000, according to Michael Plante, an economist at the Dallas Fed who has written about the effect of oil prices on the economy.

Even so, economists say low oil prices are still a net benefit for the U.S. economy.

"Consumers have more money in their pocketbooks," says Amy Myers Jaffe, an energy consultant who teaches at the University of California, Davis. And for businesses, "I can hire more people or buy new equipment because I no longer have to spend that money on energy."

WHEN DOES IT END?

Oil traders and Wall Street analysts expect further declines in oil prices in the coming weeks. Several have predicted that prices will fall below $30 a barrel and even approach $20 a barrel.

But prices are expected to rise sooner or later. Tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran has increased in recent weeks, and Middle East turmoil often causes prices to rise because traders worry about a potential disruption in supplies in the world's most important oil region.

And just as $100 oil encouraged the new production that contributed to this plunge in prices, $30 oil is discouraging the big investment needed for exploration and production for the future. The number of rigs drilling for oil in the U.S. has fallen by more than two-thirds, to 516 last week from an October 2014 peak of 1,609, according to a closely-watched count by the drilling services company Baker Hughes.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Govt to announce new safety relationship with automakers

DETROIT (AP)—Using the aviation industry as a model, automakers have agreed to work on fundamental changes in their relationship with the U.S. government in order to spot safety trends before they become problems and get new technology to the marketplace faster, a top safety regulator and a person familiar with the discussions said Tuesday. The process of issuing government regulations to correct safety problems takes too many years, Mark Rosekind, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, told reporters at the Automotive News World Congress in Detroit. By the time the regulations are issued, changes in technology make them out of date, he said. Rosekind alluded to the possibility that the auto industry will agree to safety culture changes and technology voluntarily rather than waiting for the arduous government rule-making process.

MetLife mulls spinoff or IPO of life insurance business

NEW YORK (AP)—MetLife plans to carve off a substantial portion of its U.S. life insurance business via a sale, spinoff or an initial public offering as the parent company challenges harsher regulatory oversight. The New York company has been disputing its designation by federal regulators as a "systemically important" entity that's deemed "too big to fail." That categorization makes it subject to greater government oversight and, MetLife says, exorbitant costs. It has taken the Financial Stability Oversight Council to court over the assessment. The case is ongoing. Metlife said Tuesday it believes the independent new U.S. life insurance company would compete more effectively and allow MetLife to benefit from reduced capital requirements.

SIDEBAR As oil plunges, energy companies cut jobs, postpone projects

LONDON (AP)—The world's biggest oil companies are slashing jobs and backing off major investments as the price of crude falls to new lows—and there may be more pain to come.

Companies like BP, which said Tuesday it is cutting 4,000 jobs, are slimming down to cope with the slump in oil, whose price has plummeted to its lowest level in 12 years and is not expected to recover significantly for months, possibly years. California-based Chevron said last fall that it would eliminate 7,000 jobs, while rival Shell announced 6,500 layoffs.

And it's not even the big producers that will be affected most, but the numerous companies that do business with them, such as drilling contractors and equipment suppliers.

While plummeting oil prices have been great news for motorists, airlines and other businesses that rely heavily on fuel, some 95,000 jobs were lost in the energy sector by U.S.-based companies in 2015, according to the consulting firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas. That was up from 14,000 the year before.

Energy companies expanded as oil topped $100 a barrel in 2008 and stayed there during the early part of this decade, but prices have plunged over the past two years because of high supply and weakening demand

The start of a new year hasn't helped matters, with Brent crude, the benchmark for internationally produced oil, slipping below $31 a barrel on Tuesday, a drop of about 20 percent drop since Jan. 1 and the lowest since 2004.

With some analysts forecasting a drop near $10 a barrel, companies are bracing for more trouble.

California regulators reject Volkswagen recall plan

LOS ANGELES (AP)—California regulators on Tuesday rejected Volkswagen's recall plan for some of the German automaker's most popular diesel models that used software to intentionally deceive government emissions tests, including the Beetle, Jetta, Golf and Passat. The rejection doesn't rule out an eventual recall plan for owners of the 75,688 affected 2.0-liter diesel cars in California.

But it does prolong the limbo for drivers who bought the diesels under the false impression that they were getting a cleaner engine along with a more powerful car and better mileage and who have been waiting for a path forward since the scandal unfolded last September.

The action also leaves the possibility of a buyback for VW owners.

The California Air Resources Board said Volkswagen's plan was unacceptable for a variety of reasons, including that it did not adequately identify the affected vehicles; did not include a sufficient method for obtaining the car owners' names and addresses; and did not include adequate information on how the fix would affect future emissions results.

The state agency also issued a formal notice against the German automaker, alleging its deception and failure to propose a timely solution had violated the state's clean air regulations and "fundamentally undercut" efforts to protect residents from harmful pollutants.

That finding will likely mean future fines for VW as the investigation continues.

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Nation

Obama warns against giving into election year cynicism

WASHINGTON (AP)—Eyeing the end of his presidency, Barack Obama urged Americans Tuesday night to rekindle their belief in the promise of change that first carried him to the White House, declaring that the country must not allow election-year fear and division to put economic and security progress at risk.

"All the talk of America's economic decline is political hot air," Obama said in his final State of the Union address. "So is all the rhetoric you hear about our enemies getting stronger and America getting weaker."

"The United States of America is the most powerful nation on Earth. Period. It's not even close," he said.

The president's address to lawmakers and a prime-time television audience was meant to both shape his legacy and put his imprint squarely on the race to succeed him. He defended his record - and implicitly urged the public to elect another Democratic president to build on it - but acknowledged the persistent anxieties of Americans who feel shut out of a changing economy or at risk from an evolving terror threat.

While Obama did not directly call out Republicans, he sharply, and at times sarcastically, struck back at rivals who have challenged his economic and national security stewardship.

In one of his most pointed swipes at the GOP candidates running to succeed him, Obama warned against "voices urging us to fall back into tribes, to scapegoat fellow citizens who don't look like us or pray like us or vote like we do or share the same background."

AP

President Barack Obama delivers his State of the Union address before a joint session of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2016.

His words were unexpectedly echoed by South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, who was selected to give the Republican response to Obama's address. Underscoring how the heated campaign rhetoric about immigrants and minorities from GOP front-runner Donald Trump in particular has unnerved some Republican leaders, Haley called on Americans to resist the temptation "to follow the siren call of the angriest voices."

"No one who is willing to work hard, abide by our laws and love our traditions should ever feel unwelcome," said Haley, whose parents are Indian immigrants.

Focused on his own legacy, Obama ticked off a retrospective of his domestic and foreign policy actions in office, including helping lead the economy back from the brink of depression, muscling through a sweeping health care law, taking aggressive action on climate change and ending a Cold War freeze with Cuba.

He touted implementation of the landmark nuclear deal with Iran, but made no mention of the 10 American sailors picked up by Iran Tuesday. The Pentagon said the sailors had drifted into Iranian waters after encountering mechanical problems and would be returned safely and promptly.

Pentagon: 2 US Navy boats held by Iran but will be returned

WASHINGTON (AP)—Iran was holding 10 U.S. Navy sailors and their two small boats that drifted into Iranian waters with mechanical problems. Iran accused the sailors of trespassing but American officials said Tehran has assured them that the crew and vessels would be returned safely and promptly.

The sailors were expected to be transferred to U.S. custody Wednesday morning local time.

Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook told The Associated Press that the riverine boats were moving between Kuwait and Bahrain when the U.S. lost contact with them.

U.S. officials said that the incident happened near Farsi Island in the middle of the Persian Gulf. They said some type of mechanical trouble with one of the boats caused them to run aground and they were picked up by Iran. The sailors were in Iranian custody on Farsi Island at least for some time, but it's not certain where they are now.

The semi-official Iranian news agency, FARS, said the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's navy has detained 10 foreign forces, believed to be Americans, and said the sailors were trespassing in Iranian waters. FARS also reported that one of the 10 sailors was a woman.

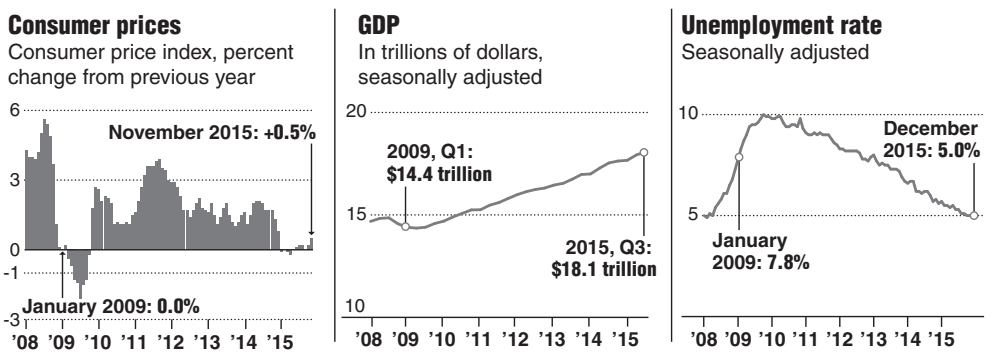
"We have been in contact with Iran and have received assurances that the crew and the vessels will be returned promptly," Cook said.

The incident came amid heightened tensions with Iran, and only hours before President Barack Obama was set to deliver his final State of the Union address to Congress and the public. It set off a dramatic series of calls and meetings as U.S. officials tried to determine the exact status of the crew and reach out to Iranian leaders.

Secretary of State John Kerry, who forged a personal relationship with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif through three years of nuclear negotiations, called Zarif immediately on learning of the incident, according to a senior U.S. official. Kerry "personally engaged with Zarif on this issue to try to get to this outcome," the official said.

The state of the economy

President Barack Obama's Tuesday night State of the Union address was the last of his presidency. Here's a look at how the economy has changed during his time in office.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Graphic: Tribune News Service

Lottery players go to great lengths for Powerball tickets

NIPTON, Calif. (AP)—Lottery ticket buyers have to suspend their belief in math to drop $2 on an infinitesimal chance to win the Powerball jackpot, but in Nevada, they also have to drive across the desert and wait in lines that can stretch for hours.

In Hawaii and Alaska, they need to cross an ocean or mountains to reach a lottery kiosk.

As if the 1 in 292.2 million odds of winning weren't inconvenient enough, people who live in the six states that don't participate in Powerball must put in considerable extra effort to get a ticket.

With the giant jackpot on his mind, retiree William Burake drove 45 minutes Monday from his home in Henderson, Nevada, to buy tickets in Nipton, California. Then he waited three hours to spend $20 on 10 tickets at a store that is among the nation's busiest lottery retailers.

"I thought maybe I'd be part of history," said Burke, a Vietnam veteran who joined hundreds of people bundled in coats and scarfs before the doors opened at the Primm Valley Lotto Store off Interstate 15.

None of the six states has a lottery of any kind.

Religious beliefs have posed a barrier in Alabama, Mississippi and Utah. Alaska has been more concerned that a lottery wouldn't pay off in such a sparsely populated state. In Hawaii, lawmakers have proposed lottery measures, but the idea always fails. And in Nevada, the lottery snub is largely a nod to the state's casinos, which have no interest in the competition.

The Multi-State Lottery Association, which runs Powerball, reports that some of the biggest ticket sales come from border cities. That means residents of one state are driving to another to play Powerball, then probably spending a bit more on gas, soda or doughnuts.

"What that means for policymakers, that's their business," said Gary Grief, executive director of the Texas Lottery. "I'm sure they're watching those dollars flow out of their state."

In Alabama, people have been talking about instituting a lottery for years, in part because of sales in border states. Faced with tight state budgets and demands from voters, Republicans and Democrats on Tuesday introduced rival lottery bills for the legislative session that begins in February.

Armed group calls meeting to talk with Oregon community

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—The armed activists occupying a national wildlife refuge in southeastern Oregon said Tuesday that they plan to hold a community meeting this week to explain themselves and inform residents when they will leave.

A member of the anti-government group told reporters that the meeting will be held Friday evening in Burns, 30 miles from the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, The Oregonian newspaper reported (http://bit.ly/1RK65f6).

Arizona rancher Robert "LaVoy" Finicum said the location has yet to be determined. He said "there should be a dialogue" but declined to give any specifics about the group's exit plans.

The small group is under pressure from many locals to end the occupation that began Jan. 2. The activists are there to oppose federal land-management policies.

Ammon Bundy, the group's leader, has previously said the group would not leave until a plan was in place to turn over federal lands to local authorities. They also want the release of Dwight and Steven Hammond, father-and-son ranchers convicted of arson who returned to prison last week to serve longer sentences.

The Hammonds' case set off the occupation, but they have distanced themselves from the activists.

Federal, state and local law enforcement are monitoring the occupation but have not taken action. Officials with the Harney County Joint Information Center declined to comment because of the ongoing investigation.

The group tore down a stretch of government-erected fence near the refuge Monday to give a local rancher access to the range. The armed men also have accessed government files and equipment.

At a community meeting that hundreds attended that night, Harney County residents repeatedly asked the group to leave. They included a Burns High School freshman, who got a standing ovation from the crowd.

"And I just want them to go home so I can feel safe and I can feel like it is home again," 15-year-old Ashlie Presley said with tears in her eyes, referring to the armed men. "I shouldn't have to be scared in my own hometown."

But some residents also said they share the activists' frustration with the federal government—though they don't agree with their tactics.

Asia

PH court OKs pact allowing US troops in local camps

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine Supreme Court on Tuesday declared as constitutional a defense pact that allows American forces, warships and planes to temporarily base in local military camps, in a boost to U.S. efforts to reassert its presence in Asia as China rises to regional dominance.

Ten of the 15 members of the high court also ruled that the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, which was signed by U.S. and Philippine officials in 2014 and has a 10-year lifespan, is an executive agreement that does not need Senate approval, court spokesman Theodore Te said.

"EDCA is not constitutionally infirm as an executive agreement," Te said at a news conference after the justices' long-awaited vote.

The ruling will bolster U.S. efforts to reassert its presence in Asia and dovetails with Philippine efforts to harness America's help in addressing China's aggressive acts in the disputed South China Sea.

Washington immediately welcomed the court's decision, saying the defense pact is a mutually beneficial accord that will bolster both countries' ability to respond to disasters and strengthen the Philippines' military.

AP

A local marching band welcomes the arrival of sailors aboard the USS Topeka (SSN-754), a Los Angeles-class submarine, as it prepares to be docked at the Alava pier off Subic port in Zambales province for a three-day port call at northwestern Philippines, Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2016.

Left-wing activists said they would consider filing an appeal, adding that U.S. military presence won't solve the country's worries over China in the disputed waters.

"This is another sad day for Philippine sovereignty," said left-wing activist Renato Reyes, who was one of those who challenged the legality of the defense accord before the high court. "We maintain that the EDCA is not the solution to the problems of China's incursions."

The Department of Foreign Affairs said that with the court's decision, the Philippines and the U.S. can finalize the full implementation of an agreement that is a critical component of efforts to strengthen national security and disaster relief capabilities.

"This decision bodes well for deepening our defense cooperation with a key ally," and will "redound to improving our capability to perform our mandate to protect our people and secure the state," said armed forces chief Gen. Hernando Iriberri.

The court decision came ahead of high-level U.S.-Philippine talks Tuesday in Washington on defense, security and economic cooperation. Speaking ahead of the talks, Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario welcomed the ruling.

"Both the United States and the Philippines recognize the importance of the EDCA as an important security component in our treaty alliance," del Rosario told The Associated Press.

The Philippines has turned to Washington as it scrambles to strengthen its military, one of the most ill-equipped in Asia, to deal with an increasingly assertive China in the South China Sea.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Seoul media: S. Korea fires warning shots after drone spotted

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—News reports say that South Korea has fired warning shots after a North Korean drone was seen crossing the Korean border. Yonhap news agency reported the North Korean drone returned to the North on Wednesday shortly after the South fired. South Korea's Defense Ministry couldn't immediately confirm the report. The incident comes amid animosities between the two Koreas in the wake of North Korea's nuclear test one week ago. South Korea's president earlier Wednesday urged North Korea's only major ally, China, to help punish Pyongyang's recent nuclear test with the strongest possible international sanctions.

Vietnam dismisses China's accounts of test flights

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—Vietnam has dismissed China's accounts of its test flights to an island in disputed waters, saying it received no information of the flights as claimed by a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman. China Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei told reporters Monday that China's three test flights to the Fiery Cross Reefs earlier this month were state aviation activities and had no restrictions under international law, but that it had informed Vietnamese aviation authorities and Foreign Ministry about them. Hong said Vietnam had failed "to see the professional, technical and civil nature of China's inspection and test flights."

Indian court bans bull fighting at harvest festival

NEW DELHI (AP)—India's Supreme Court on Tuesday banned this year's bull fighting ritual at a harvest festival in southern India following angry protests from activists who say the sport amounts to animal torture. The court also asked the Environment Ministry to respond to petitions from several animal rights groups that have campaigned to have the sport of Jallikattu permanently outlawed. Jallikattu takes place in Tamil Nadu state during the harvest festival of Pongal, which falls this year on Friday. Thousands of men chase the bulls to get prizes tied to their horns. Animal rights groups say the animals are terrified and are often deliberately disoriented with alcohol, and are wounded with knives and sticks as they are dragged to the ground.

S. Korea leader calls for Chinese help to punish North Korea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's president on Wednesday urged North Korea's only major ally, China, to help punish Pyongyang's recent nuclear test with the strongest possible international sanctions.

Park Geun-hye's comments came as Seoul said North Korea had flown leaflets across the border describing her and her government as "mad dogs" as Cold War-style propaganda warfare continued between the rivals.

South Korea, the United States and others are pushing hard to impose fresh sanctions and other punitive measures on the North for what Pyongyang said was a hydrogen bomb test one week ago.

There is widespread skepticism over the H-bomb claim, but whatever the North detonated underground will likely push the country closer toward a fully functional nuclear arsenal, which it still is not thought to have.

Diplomats at a U.N. Security Council emergency session last week pledged to swiftly pursue new sanctions. For current sanctions and any new penalties to work, better cooperation and stronger implementation from China, the North's diplomatic and economic protector and a veto-wielding permanent member of the Security Council, is seen as key.

On Wednesday, Park said in a nationally televised news conference that South Korea will push as hard as it can for strong sanctions that can force change in North Korea. But, she said, Chinese help is crucial.

"Holding the hands of someone in a difficult situation is the mark of the best partner," Park said, referring to China and South Korea's need to punish the North.

Beijing is seen as reluctant to clamp down on the North in part because of fears that a toppled government in Pyongyang would see millions of desperate North Koreans flooding across the border with China and a U.S.-backed South Korean government in control of the Korean Peninsula.

In the wake of the nuclear test a week ago, the two Koreas have settled into a Cold War-era standoff. Since Friday, South Korea has been blasting anti-Pyongyang propaganda from huge speakers along the border, and the North is using speakers of its own in an attempt to keep its soldiers from hearing the South Korean messages.

Afghan official warns Taliban on staying out of peace talks

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A senior Afghan official on Tuesday warned the Taliban against staying out of the peace process with the government in Kabul, saying that insurgents who opt for war will face serious consequences.

The remarks by Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai came after he returned from a four-country meeting in Islamabad that worked on a roadmap for ending Afghanistan's 14-year war.

Karzai said all participants at Monday's gathering—Afghanistan, the United States, Pakistan and China—wanted to bring "permanent peace" to his country.

Most Taliban want peace, he told reporters, but he added that "we will use all the means we have against those who do not." He also described the country's conflict as "not a war between Afghans" and stressed the involvement of "foreign elements."

Kabul officials have long accused Pakistan of sponsoring the Taliban in cities near the Afghan border, including Quetta and Peshawar—accusations that Islamabad denies.

The Taliban were not invited to the one-day meeting.

Though the participants agreed to meet again in Kabul on Jan. 18, also without Taliban participation, little else is known about the outcome of the gathering.

Ahead of the gathering, however, an Afghan government spokesman had told The Associated Press that the Pakistani side was expected to present a list of Taliban representatives willing to negotiate with Kabul.

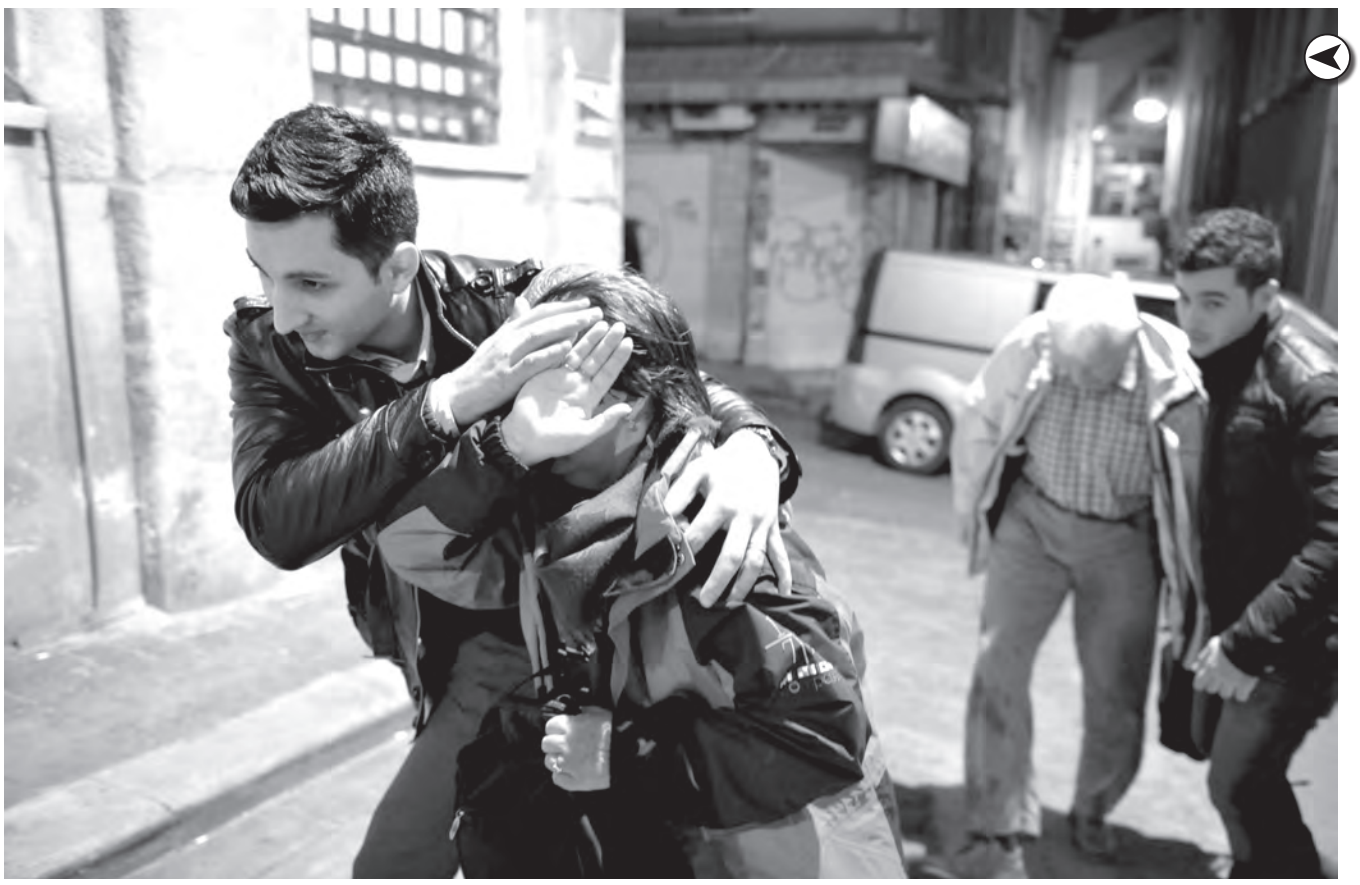
Javid Faisal said that Afghanistan and Pakistan had also agreed on "bilateral cooperation on eliminating terrorism," a reference to insurgents who opt to stay in the fight.

Monday's meeting aimed to revive a process that collapsed last summer after Afghanistan announced that Mullah Mohammad Omar, founder and leader of the Taliban, had died in a Pakistani hospital more than two years ago.

The announcement led the Taliban to pull out of the talks after just one meeting hosted by Islamabad. A subsequent power struggle within the Taliban has raised questions about who would represent the insurgents if and when the talks with Kabul are restarted.

World

Suicide bomber kills 10, wounds 15 in Istanbul tourist area



AP

People believed to be German tourists that were targeted at an explosion in the historic Sultanahmet district are escorted back to their hotel in Istanbul, Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2016.

ISTANBUL (AP)—A suicide bomber detonated a bomb in the heart of Istanbul's historic district on Tuesday, killing 10 foreigners—most of them German tourists—and wounding 15 other people in the latest in a string of attacks by the Islamic extremists targeting Westerners.

The blast, just steps from the historic Blue Mosque and a former Byzantine church in the city's storied Sultanahmet district, was the first by IS to target Turkey's vital tourism sector, although IS militants have struck with deadly effect elsewhere in the country.

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said the bomber was a member of IS and pledged to battle the militant group until it no longer "remains a threat" to Turkey or the world.

Davutoglu described the assailant as a "foreign national," and Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus said he was a Syrian citizen born in 1988. However, the private Dogan news agency said the bomber was Saudi-born. Kurtulmus said the attacker was believed to have recently entered Turkey from Syria and was not among a list of potential bombers wanted by Turkey.

"Turkey won't backtrack in its struggle against Daesh by even one step," Davutoglu said, referring to IS by its Arabic acronym. "This terror organization, the assailants and all of their connections will be found and they will receive the punishments they deserve."

Eight Germans were among the dead and nine others were wounded, some seriously, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier told reporters in Berlin. The nationalities of the two others killed in the blast were not immediately released, but both were foreigners. The wounded also included citizens of Norway, Peru, South Korea and Turkey.

Turkey's state-run news agency said Davutoglu held a telephone conversation with German chancellor Angela Merkel to express his condolences.

"I strongly condemn the terror incident that occurred in Istanbul, at the Sultanahmet Square, and which has been assessed as being an attack by a Syria-rooted suicide bomber," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said.

Merkel pledged Germany would continue its fight against terrorism.

"Today Istanbul was the target, before Paris, Copenhagen, Tunis, and so many other areas," she told reporters in Berlin. "International terror changes the places of its attacks but its goal is always the same—it is our free life, in free society. The terrorists are the enemies of all free people, indeed, the enemies of all humanity, whether in Syria or Turkey, in France or Germany."

Mexico mounted huge manhunt to catch "El Chapo" Guzman

MEXICO CITY (AP)—The capture of Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman followed the most intensive manhunt in modern Mexican history, with at least 2,500 security and intelligence agents dedicated to getting a man whose escape had personally embarrassed the nation's president.

The government says the hunt involved piecing together information from intelligence, data, interrogations and raids—as well as monitoring actors Sean Penn and Kate del Castillo as they came to interview the world's most wanted trafficker.

While Mexican authorities had spent decades chasing Guzman, the chase following his July escape from a top-security prison was different for two reasons, said a former government intelligence official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the case.

"One, El Chapo stopped being clandestine. He left the mountain. He met with people, as we now know. That made it easier for intelligence units to find him," said the ex-official, who maintains sources inside security operations. "The other factor: there were, from the time of the escape, 2,500 people from various security agencies exclusively dedicated ... to mount a successful operation."

President Enrique Pena Nieto's office and the attorney general's office didn't respond to attempts by The Associated Press to confirm the number, but others who had been briefed said it was at least 2,500.

Even so, it took six months to catch him, with Mexican news media carrying repeated reports of marine raids into the mountains of Guzman's native Sinaloa state.

Guzman was nabbed early Friday morning after a shootout in the city of Los Mochis that killed five of his men and wounded one marine.

The former official interviewed Guzman when he was arrested the first time in 1993 and led operations over the years in the remote mountains of Sinaloa and Durango states, known as the Golden Triangle, after Guzman first escaped a maximum security facility in 2001. He said the size of those operations involved only around 60 troops, not hundreds.

Siege, starvation left Syrian town in 'grim' state, UN says

BEIRUT (AP)—Siege and starvation have left the rebel-held Syrian town of Madaya in a nightmarish state not seen elsewhere in the country, a U.N. official who traveled there said Tuesday, as some 300 residents fled and desperately needed humanitarian aid arrived.

The former mountain resort, besieged since last summer by forces loyal to President Bashar Assad, came to international attention in recent weeks as reports of starvation emerged and activists shared images of emaciated children and old men widely on social media.

Sajjad Malik, the U.N. refugee agency's chief in Damascus, told journalists that the "very grim" picture was the result of a blockade of food, medicine and other supplies that left the town in a "desperate situation."

"There is no comparison to what we saw in Madaya," he said from Damascus by telephone to Geneva. "It is a place where you could see there are people, but there is no life... What we saw is something that was pretty horrible."

Malik described seeing shivering, malnourished children and young adults, saying "most of them had not had bread or rice or vegetables or fruit for months." He said a kilogram (2.2 pounds) of rice would sell there for $300, and noted one account of one person selling a motorcycle to buy 5 kilos of rice.

A day earlier, the U.N. said that about 400 people in the town's hospital needed to be evacuated immediately for medical treatment as starvation and other factors had left them on the brink of death. Syrian authorities, rebels and aid groups have yet to respond. The U.N. goal was to obtain safe passage to evacuate the 400 later on Tuesday.

U.N. officials said it was too early to determine whether anyone had died of hunger. But the aid group Doctors Without Borders has said that 23 people died of starvation at a health center it supports in Madaya since Dec. 1, including six infants and five adults over 60.

Various U.N. officials have described how locals had been forced to forage for food, such as risking walks in minefields to collect grass or cooking up "leaf soup," and were burning cardboard to stay warm in their homes.

Madaya is not the only place in Syria suffering from siege, an age-old tactic of war that belligerents continue to use despite international laws banning it. The U.N. says some 15 municipalities across Syria are currently blockaded, with no one able to get in or out.

UK man faces French trial for trying to save migrant girl

GUISELEY, England (AP)—Rob Lawrie had a choice. On one side lay the law—you can't sneak a 4-year-old girl across international borders—and on the other side sat his sentiments: How could he leave that girl trapped in a squalid migrant camp?

He led with his heart—and was caught. He goes on trial Thursday in France, accused of aiding illegal immigration for trying to take Bahar Ahmadi from the settlement in Calais, France, to safety in England, where the Afghan girl had family waiting to look after her.

Judges in Boulogne-Sur-Mer will determine if the ex-British soldier is a criminal, or a compassionate man who couldn't turn his back on a child in need.

In September, he gave in to the repeated pleas of the girl's father, Reza Ahmadi, who begged him to spirit his daughter across the English Channel, but they were stopped by guards who eventually found her squirreled away in Lawrie's van, teddy bear squeezed tightly to her chest.

Lawrie, 49, faces criminal charges that carry a maximum prison term of five years and a 30,000-euro ($32,500) fine—even as thousands have flocked to his Facebook page to express admiration for what he's done and signed an online petition urging the British government to ask the French for clemency.

"I had told her father 'no' many times," Lawrie said in his small suburban-style house in Guiseley, 210 miles (335 kilometers) north of London. "But half past 10 one rainy night, when she fell asleep on my knee as I was leaving for the ferry, I just couldn't leave her there anymore. All rational thought left my head."

He said he bonded with "Bru"—the girl's nickname—after he volunteered to help design and build shelters at the squalid camp in Calais that is home to about 4,200 people fleeing war and poverty.

"She left Afghanistan, with her father via traffickers, when she was less than 3," he said. "It's incomprehensible. The reason I became so close is I never once saw her without a smile on her face."

He said he could no longer leave her in a cold, dangerous and unsanitary camp when she had family waiting for her living close by his home in northern England.

Environment

Europe pushes bicycling in hopes of shrinking carbon emissions

By MATTHEW SCHOFIELD
MCCLATCHY WASHINGTON BUREAU

BERLIN—In the cold of winter—on a day when sunrise and sunset were separated only by 7 hours of cloudy daylight in Berlin—Marion Giesske rode her bike to work.

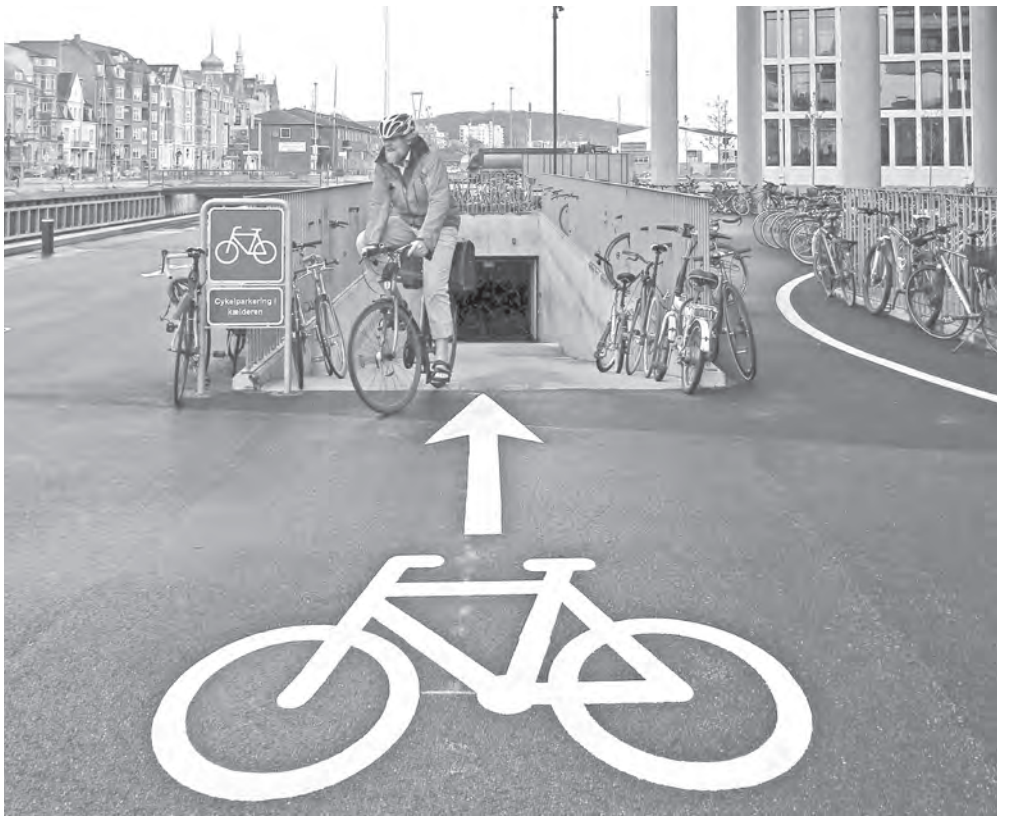
This wasn't a remarkable occurrence in her life; she also rides in the warmth of summer, when Berlin's daylight lasts for almost 17 hours, and on most days in between. But it does make her a success story in a grand design in Berlin and cities throughout northern Europe to wean commuters off car travel and onto bikes. From her perspective, riding a bike is an easy choice.

"Every day is a good day when it starts with a sunrise you see from your bike," the 55-year-old explained. "To come home on the bike is to relax, and to see everyone else looking very stressed in their cars. The trains are packed. The bike is perfect."

Berlin's goal is to have 1 of every 5 trips within the city to be made by bike before 2025. To help in this effort, city law offers a tax break that's equivalent to 53 U.S. cents for every mile a cyclist commutes. Last year, the city invested $16 million in bike infrastructure.

By U.S. standards, its efforts represent both heavy investment and high goals. By Northern European standards these days, however, Berlin is a poseur in the push to encourage cycling. Copenhagen, where 36 percent of commuters road bikes in 2012, completed 2015 with that number surpassing 50 percent.

In Norway's capital, Oslo, a city just about as far north as Anchorage and where the sun these days is rising after 9 a.m. and setting just after 3 p.m., the city council has been talking about banning cars from downtown. The idea is that even in a country that relies on oil revenue for wealth and has a surplus of electrical power, the bike should be the default mode of transport.



CLAUDIA HIMMELREICH/
MCCLATCHY DC/TNS
An underground bike parking garage in Aarhus, Denmark, is one example of the investment European cities are making in cycling infrastructure. European cities, already often with impressive bicycle infrastructure, are preparing to spend even more as they try to reduce traffic congestion and carbon footprint by increasing bike traffic. Photo taken on Nov. 9, 2015.

It's not just a whim, either. The council, which is proposing to spend $450 million during the next decade on bike infrastructure, was elected in September on a bikes-first platform. The goal: By 2019, reduce car traffic citywide by 20 percent. By 2030, reduce car traffic by a third. To get there, the council is considering increasing the daily fee that gas-using cars pay to enter the city. The payoff: reducing the nation's carbon footprint by 40 percent.

"Oslo wants to become an example for the world," Ola Elvestuen, a member of the Norwegian Parliament's Committee on Energy and the Environment, said last year at a green transportation conference in Portland, Ore.

Doing so means surpassing places such as Amsterdam or the large number of cities in northern Europe that are bike friendly, where bridges, traffic signals and multistory parking garages have been built with cyclists in mind. Networks of bike paths and protected lanes often make a cycling commute faster than one by car.

Stefan Goessling is a professor of service management at Sweden's Lund University and a co-author of perhaps the most comprehensive study of the costs of travel by cycling vs. automobiles. His recent study, "Transport Transitions in Copenhagen: Comparing the Cost of Cars and Bicycles," determined that "when all aspects are included," the cost of a mile cycled is 14 cents, while a mile by car is 88 cents.

Goessling argues that the social benefits of cycling amount to 28 cents a mile in savings on health care and other services, while each car mile costs society 27 cents in road deterioration, energy and the lost time of commuters.

In an email response to questions from McClatchy, Goessling noted that one point of the study of Copenhagen was "to determine whether it is economically justifiable to build more infrastructure for cycles." He added that beyond the study, "it is obvious that the cost of cycle infrastructure is far lower than the infrastructure needed for cars."

He said the study looked only at Copenhagen, but he thinks the results would apply to many cities.

"There is such a huge difference between bicycles and cars that it is unlikely results would be any different in other contexts," he wrote.

He even thinks the United State could benefit from a similar approach, though the commuting distances for many would be substantial.

"It will be a huge gain to build infrastructure for cyclists, from a national economics viewpoint," he said. "I could even imagine that health benefits in the U.S. could be greater than in Copenhagen, as you have a population that arguably in parts could do with more exercise."

Powerful replacement in works for climate-modeling computer

CHEYENNE, Wyoming (AP)—One of the most powerful computers in the world dedicated to climate change, weather and other earth science research will be replaced in 2017 by an even faster machine, officials announced Monday.

The Yellowstone supercomputer in Wyoming currently ranks among the 60 fastest in the world. The new supercomputer, to be named Cheyenne, will be at least 2 1/2 times more powerful, the National Center for Atmospheric Research said.

Capable of 5.3 quadrillion calculations, or petaflops, per second, Cheyenne will be some 100,000 times faster than a typical home computer. The speed provides unprecedented detail in climate-change predictions, including regional modeling of effects, the center said.

A more powerful computer will allow researchers to see results in higher resolution, like a higher density of pixels sharpens images on a television or a stronger telescope brings a greater number of far-off galaxies into focus, explained Rich Loft, the center's director of technology.

Scientists since 2012 have been using the Yellowstone supercomputer near Cheyenne for a range of research that also includes modeling air pollution and ocean currents.

The atmospheric research center plans to install Cheyenne later this year and put it to work early next year. Questions it might help answer include:

■ Is the California drought a fluke or due to global climate change?

■ Can scientists predict the intensity of solar flares—streams of radiation released by the sun that can endanger satellites and astronauts—during an upcoming solar cycle?

■ How might climate change increase the likelihood of drought and change the extent of arctic sea ice from decade to decade?

The Yellowstone computer, located in a business park west of Cheyenne, put Wyoming's capital on the map as a potential technology hub. Facilities including a huge Microsoft data center have set up nearby since the center opened.

The Cheyenne supercomputer will be about three times as efficient as Yellowstone, using 90 percent as much electricity but taking up to a third as much space. The machine will be built by Milpitas, California-based Silicon Graphics International Corp.

The University Corp. for Atmospheric Research, a consortium of more than 100 North American universities and colleges, oversees the National Center for Atmospheric Research. Both organizations are based in Boulder, Colorado.

First-ever federal rules for offshore fish farming issued

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—The first-ever federal regulations for large-scale fish farming in the ocean were issued Monday, opening a new frontier in the harvesting of popular seafood species such as red drum, tuna and red snapper.

The new rules allow the farming of fish in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The rules—in the making for years—were announced in New Orleans by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

NOAA Administrator Kathryn Sullivan said the Gulf rules could spur similar rules in other U.S. waters. She said it was time for the United States to open up this new market, which she said could help the U.S. meet its seafood demands.

Fish farming is contentious, with fishermen and environmentalists warning it could harm the marine environment and put fishermen out of work.

Typically, offshore farming is done by breeding fish in large semi-submersible pens moored to the seafloor. The practice is common in many parts of the world, and Sullivan said the United States has fallen behind. About 90 percent of the seafood consumed in the United States is imported and more than half of that is farmed, she noted.

She said expanding fish farming has numerous benefits.

"It's good for the balance of trade, it's good for the food security of the country," she said. She said it could create jobs, too.

The new rules allow up to 20 fish farms to open in the Gulf and produce 64 million pounds of fish a year. The farms can start applying for 10-year permits starting in February, she said.

Sullivan said the fish farms would be kept away from sensitive habitats and fishermen would be allowed to fish near them. She envisioned little competition between the farms and fishermen.

Neil Sims, the president of the Ocean Stewards Institute, an offshore industry group, said the rules were groundbreaking. "It's a huge step," Sims said. "It's the federal government recognizing we must move forward here."

He said concerns about fish farming causing environmental problems are unfounded. "The beauty of open ocean aquaculture is that you are in deep water far offshore," he said. "It's more akin to a Colorado cattle range than a feedlot."

Rather than import farmed seafood, he said, the nation would be better off producing more of its own.

"We have no idea how it (imported seafood) is farmed, what the environmental standards are, what the animal welfare standards," Sims said about imports.

Marianne Cufone, executive director of the New Orleans-based Recirculating Farms Coalition and longtime critic of offshore fish farming, warned of polluting the Gulf and hurting wild stocks.

A concern is that domesticated fish—bred to be larger—will escape their pens and outcompete wild fish for habitat and food, she said.

Sims dismissed that argument. "Over time, we will indeed select for fatter, slower, more docile individuals," Sims said. "But then that domesticated animal is going to be hopeless in the wild. A fat, slow, docile, fish outside of a net pen is called bait."

Sullivan said concerns about escaped farmed fish are real, but she added that the rules require growers to breed fish with the same genetics as local stocks.

Life & Style

1715 multicolored Hadley chest could fetch $500K at auction

NEW YORK (AP)—A 300-year-old Massachusetts chest of drawers embellished with a rare polychrome design is headed to auction where it could fetch as much as $500,000.

The oak chest is one of only four known examples of a "Hadley" polychrome—or multicolored—piece believed to be decorated by the same artist.

"Anyone who gets this piece has an instant collection, all in one piece," said John Hays, deputy chairman and specialist of American furniture at Christie's, where it will be offered on Jan. 22 as part of its Americana Week.

The 1715 Hadley chest is believed to be the first Hadley polychrome piece by the unidentified paint-decorator to come to market, Hays said. The other three are in museums: the Winterthur in Wilmington, Delaware, Memorial Hall Museum in Deerfield, Massachusetts, and the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

The same craftsman is believed to have painted and laid out the design on all four pieces, Christie's said.

What distinguishes them from other Hadley painted pieces is that they have a white background that was then embellished with a polychrome palette of orange, green, black and red and laid out in a compass-work design.

"The decorations on all the pieces are similar but the delicate painted squiggles and fine line details are virtually untouched on this piece," said conservator and paint analyst Susan Buck.

While subsequent layers of varnish have darkened its appearance, the Christie's piece "appears to retain the most intact paint decoration of the four," she said.

The chest's design, featuring dartboard motifs and compass circles, also is unencumbered. "You can actually see the scribe lines of his compass work," said Hays.

Hadley pieces derive their name from the region where they were made around Hadley, Massachusetts, from the late 17th through the early 18th century. The majority were carved with a floral pattern and used as dowry chests with the owner's initials carved into the piece.

The Christie's piece is not initialed. It is believed to be descended directly from Hadley and is being offered for sale by a West Coast family.

AP

This undated photo provided by Christie's, shows a 300-year-old Massachusetts chest of drawers embellished with a rare polychrome design - some of it created with a compass tool. The chest is coming to auction on Jan. 22, 2016, at Christie's in New York where it could fetch as much as $500,000.

Benigni on Pope Francis: A fountain, waterfall of mercy

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Oscar-winning actor and director Roberto Benigni gave Pope Francis two thumbs up Tuesday, delivering one of his rapid-fire monologues and praising the pope as a fountain of mercy who is "dragging the whole church toward Christianity."

At perhaps the most unusual Vatican book launch ever, Benigni was joined by the Vatican secretary of state, the Vatican spokesman and the Vatican publisher, as well as a Chinese prison inmate, to premier "The Name of God is Mercy." Francis' book-length conversation with Italian journalist Andrea Tornielli is being released in 86 countries as part of the pope's Holy Year of Mercy.

Benigni, whose 1999 "Life is Beautiful" won three Oscars, joked that he wanted to be a priest as a child but realized he had to become a comic instead after friends laughed when he said he wanted to be pope.

In recent years, Benigni has entertained television audiences in Italy with poignant monologues spliced with dramatic readings of Dante, the Italian constitution, and most recently, the 10 Commandments. The performances, carried on RAI state television, have shown him to be a man of obvious humor but also one of deep faith.

It was his Christmastime performance on the 10 Commandments that earned Benigni a phone call from the pope and an invitation to help launch the book.

"As soon as they called me and said, 'the Holy Father would like...' 'YES!' I said without letting them finish. Whatever he needs: If he needs a Swiss Guard, a driver for the popemobile, anything at all for this pope, I am ready. I will never say no."

Gesturing wildly, Benigni praised Francis for living the message of mercy, going to visit the "least of the least" in Lampedusa, ground zero in Europe's migration crisis, and launching his jubilee year of mercy with the "poorest of the poorest of the poor" in Central African Republic.

"He's a fountain, a waterfall of mercy," Benigni said. "In such an unrecognizable world, that wants hatred and condemnation, Francis responds with mercy."

Benigni, who delivered his memorable Oscar acceptance speech after clambering over the chairs of the audience, said Francis is clearly a pope on the move, "dragging the whole church toward Christianity."

The high-profile book launch was a clear indication of the importance the Vatican places on the book and Francis' overall message of mercy. The event featured a Chinese man who converted to Catholicism last year while serving a 20-year prison sentence in Italy.

Francis, who has made prison ministry a mainstay of his life's vocation, has directed the jubilee year in a special way to prison inmates, saying God's mercy extends to them as well.

AP

In this Monday, Jan. 11, 2016 photo, Pope Francis shakes hands with Oscar-winning actor Roberto Benigni after receiving the Italian edition of his first book as pope ' The Name of God is Mercy ', at the Vatican.

CBS to unveil new technology for Super Bowl 50 broadcast

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—The Super Bowl is turning 50, although the game played next month on America's informal national holiday will hardly be showing its age because of new gadgetry CBS Sports is debuting.

A replay system will give viewers a 360-degree perspective and higher resolution than previously ever seen for the game. Thirty-six cameras strung around the upper deck of Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California, can freeze the moment and revolve around the play before continuing to show the scene. Viewers on Feb. 7 will be able to check out the quarterback's view from the pocket to other players' perspectives on the field, and it can be animated, too.

"We tried it on a couple regular-season games and it looks remarkable," CBS Sports Chairman Sean McManus said Tuesday at a gathering of TV critics.

For the first time in a Super Bowl, CBS will use eight custom-molded pylons that house 16 cameras to film the goal lines and sidelines of both teams. The cameras also will have microphones embedded in them to enhance the game's natural sound. They were used in the College Football Playoff championship Monday.

The new technology could even influence the game. The officials are able to use any replays a network shows when they review a play.

During the game, the network will use the NFL's Next Gen stats that track how fast and far players run over the course of the day and matchup-based statistics between players.

CBS Sports is changing its logo for the first time in 35 years and updating its on-air graphics to debut during Super Bowl week.

Gayle King of "CBS This Morning" will conduct a live interview with President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle as part of the coverage.

McManus said planning for the event's landmark anniversary began five days after last year's game ended. CBS will be airing its 19th Super Bowl, the most of any network. "We're pumped up about it," he said. "We can't wait for Super Bowl Sunday."

During game week at 8 p.m. nightly, CBS will air one-minute updates from either San Francisco or Santa Clara.

On game day, the network will air seven hours of programming using four sets: one on Market Street in downtown San Francisco and three from the stadium in Santa Clara (one outside near the tailgating area, one on the field and the main hosts on a concourse overlooking the field).

"We know the appetite is insatiable when it comes to football," pregame host James Brown said.

‘Fifty Shades of Grey,’ ‘Pixels’ among Razzies nominees

LOS ANGELES (AP)—”Fifty Shades of Grey” is all tied up with “Pixels,” ‘’Jupiter Ascending” and “Paul Blart Mall Cop 2” for the most nominations at this year’s Golden Raspberry Awards celebrating the worst in cinema.

The films led the Razzies lineup Wednesday with six nods each, including worst picture and worst actor for Jamie Dornan in the sexy thriller “Fifty Shades of Grey,” Kevin James in the comedy sequel “Paul Blart Mall Cop 2,” Channing Tatum in the sci-fi film “Jupiter Ascending” and Adam Sandler in the video game mash-up “Pixels” and fantasy-comedy “The Cobbler.”

The other worst picture nominee is the superhero flop “Fantastic Four,” which is also up for worst remake, screen combo, director for Josh Trank and screenplay for Simon Kinberg, Jeremy Slater and Trank.

The announcement of the Razzies, which launched in 1980 as a spoof of Hollywood’s awards season, comes ahead of Thursday’s Oscar nominations.

The “winners” for the 36th annual Razzies will be announced Feb. 27, the night before the 88th annual Academy Awards. They will be selected by 900 voting members from 47 states in the United States and 21 foreign countries.

While far less star-studded than other award shows, past recipients such as Halle Berry and Sandra Bullock have actually shown up in person to claim their gold spray-painted prizes.

Stallone thanks ‘Creed’ director, co-star

Stallone

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Sylvester Stallone has taken to social media to officially thank “Creed” director Ryan Coogler and star Michael B. Jordan days after winning the Golden Globe for best supporting actor in the film.

He wrote Tuesday on Twitter that he owes everything to his director and co-star.

Stallone reprises his role as Rocky Balboa in “Creed.”

At Sunday’s ceremony, Stallone failed to recognize Coogler and Jordan in his acceptance speech. The actor did return to the stage during a commercial break to make amends to his collaborators.

But the moment wasn’t televised, and many people criticized Stallone on social media for his oversight, including Samuel L. Jackson and Ava DuVernay. In his tweet, Stallone says Jackson is right for being upset that he “foolishly forgot” to mention Coogler and Jordan.

Ridley Scott among Directors Guild noms

Scott

NEW YORK (AP)—Adam McKay, Tom McCarthy and George Miller landed their first nods from the Directors Guild of America in a group of nominees that spanned genres from comedy to science fiction.

Nominations for outstanding achievement in directing went to McKay for the finance romp “The Big Short,” McCarthy for his Boston Globe investigative drama “Spotlight” and Miller for the post-apocalyptic sequel “Mad Max: Fury Road.” They are joined by Ridley Scott for the science-fiction blockbuster “The Martian” and Alejandro Inarritu for the frontier thriller “The Revenant”—who are both celebrating their fourth DGA nod.

The DGA Awards are a closely watched indicator of which directors will be likely Oscar nominees on Thursday, and which films have the strongest support from filmmakers. In an awards season lacking a clear front-runner, the only films to win the top nominations from producer, actor and director guilds are “Spotlight” and “The Big Short.”

Notably left out by the directors’ group were Todd Haynes for the period romance “Carol” and Steven Spielberg for his Cold War tale “Bridge of Spies.” Being overlooked by the DGA doesn’t mean that neither could land an Academy Award nod (the two groups haven’t aligned perfectly since 2010), but at least four of the DGA nominees are likely to hear their names read on Thursday.

Last year, the overlooked Bennett Miller (“Foxcatcher”) went on to replace Clint Eastwood (“American Sniper”) at the Oscars, where Inarritu won best director for “Birdman.” This year, Haynes could be the selection subbed in by the directors’ branch of the Academy of Motion Pictures, which is a much smaller collection of filmmakers: about 400 members to the DGA’s approximately 16,000.

A DGA nod is also good news for the best-picture chances of the five nominees. Since the Oscars expanded the best picture field, only one DGA-nominated movie has failed to also land in the best-picture nominees: David Fincher’s “Girl With the Dragon Tattoo.”

This year, the DGA also added an award for first-time directors. The category’s inaugural nominees are: Alex Garland (“Ex Machina”), Joel Edgerton (“The Gift”), Marielle Heller (“Diary of a Teenage Girl”), Laszlo Nemes (“Son of Saul”) and Fernando Coimbra (“A Wolf at the Door”).

Directors Guild awards nominees for documentaries, television and commercials will be announced Wednesday. Winners in all categories will be revealed at a dinner in Los Angeles on Feb. 6, hosted by Jane Lynch.

Murdoch and Hall’s engagement recalls similar curious pairings

AP

In this Sept. 5, 1994 file photo, pop star Michael Jackson and his wife Lisa Marie Presley wave to photographers as they visit the Versailles castle near Paris.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Many greeted the news of Rupert Murdoch’s engagement to Jerry Hall with a resounding “Huh?”

The 84-year-old media mogul and the 59-year-old actress announced their betrothal Tuesday with a classified ad in the London Times, a newspaper owned by Murdoch’s News Corp.

This will be his Murdoch’s fourth marriage. Hall had a long relationship (and unofficial Hindu wedding) with Mick Jagger, with whom she has four children.

While their coupling may be curious, it’s hardly the first celebrity pairing to draw attention. Here are some other romantic match-ups that raised eyebrows:

■ Lisa Marie Presley & Michael Jackson: Presley and Jackson became close in the early 1990s. They wed amid a swirl of publicity in 1994, after Jackson faced accusations of child molestation (later settled out of court) and canceled concerts for health reasons. They divorced two years later.

■ Liza Minnelli & David Gest: The relationship between the Oscar winner and the TV producer was marked by awkward public displays of affection. They married in 2002 and separated 18 months later. After their split, he sued her for $10 million claiming she physically assaulted him during their relationship; she countersued over claims he’d stolen $2 million in earnings from her performances. They finally filed for divorce in 2007.

■ Sandra Bullock & Jesse James: Bullock edged up her image when she married the custom motorcycle builder in 2005. A cleaned-up James was by the actress’ side when she won her best actress Oscar in 2010. A week later, reports surfaced that James had been unfaithful and Bullock canceled several public appearances. She filed for divorce later that year.

■ Mary-Kate Olsen & Olivier Sarkozy: She’s a 29-year-old American child star turned fashion designer; he’s a 46-year-old French banker and his brother was the country’s president. They reportedly wed in November, 2015.

Gulf separating mother, son growns greater than distance

DEAR ABBY: I moved overseas for work when I was 18. My father divorced my mom around the same time. I used to come back to the U.S. for two weeks every year to visit and stay with Mom. However, for the past eight years she has sent me emails "suggesting" in a roundabout way that I was not totally welcome. Because of this, I haven't been back in six years.

For the last 20-plus years I have given my mother about $7,000. Because I'm not welcome in her home, I told her I won't give her any more. She is now showing regret for her previous emails, but for me it's too late. Since I'm no longer sending money, she will have to sell her condo.

She's getting old and doesn't have much time left, and I can't wait until she passes on. I despise her. For me it is unacceptable for a mother to not welcome her son into her home for two weeks a year. Am I overreacting? Is my level of hate valid?

REJECTED SON IN THAILAND

DEAR REJECTED SON: Not knowing your mother's reason for implying you weren't welcome to stay with her, your question is hard to answer. I understand why you would feel hurt, even angry. But looking forward to the day she's no longer on this earth strikes me as an overreaction.

From what I have read on the subject—as well as personal experience—I have concluded that hatred is like acid. It hurts the hater worse than the person at whom it is aimed. At this point your mother has lost her son and now she's losing her home. I'd say that's a large dose of punishment for her lack of hospitality. If you can't mend fences, then dwell on the positive things you have in your life rather than wasting time wishing her dead.

DEAR ABBY: I've been married to my wife for nine years. She is addicted to Ambien and pain meds. I love her with all my heart, but the constant trips to the hospital and emergency rooms have left me feeling numb. The episodes are all pretty much the same "Groundhog Day" scenario. I'm in so much pain emotionally.

They treat her because she claims to have lupus. The real story is her addiction. My question is, what do I do? She has been to the hospital at least 30 times in our nine years of marriage. Please help me help her. Thank you.

TIRED IN TEXAS

DEAR TIRED: You say the people at the hospital are unaware that your wife is a prescription drug addict. Why haven't you told them the truth and revealed where your wife is getting all those pills? For too long you have tolerated a situation that is destructive for both of you.

You may love your wife and want to be supportive, but you can't save her from her addiction. Only she can do that by admitting she's out of control, seeking help and sticking to a program.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

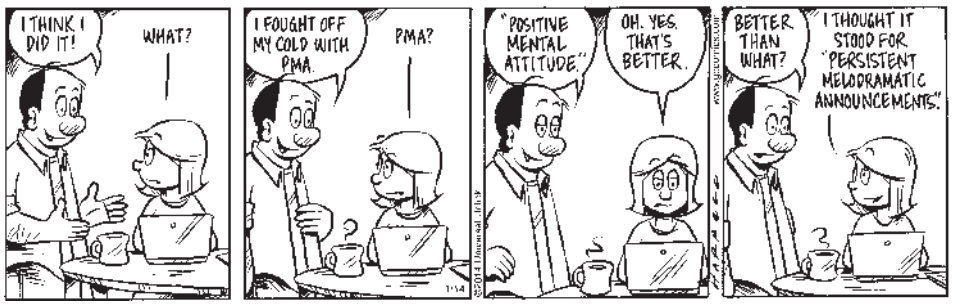
CALVIN, I DON'T WANT TO BE SPANKED!
WHAT IF IT GOES ON OUR ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS? WE'LL BE RUINED!
* SNIFF *
DARN YOU, CALVIN!! YOU'RE GONNA ANSWER TO MY PARENTS IF I CAN'T GET MY MASTER'S DEGREE!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

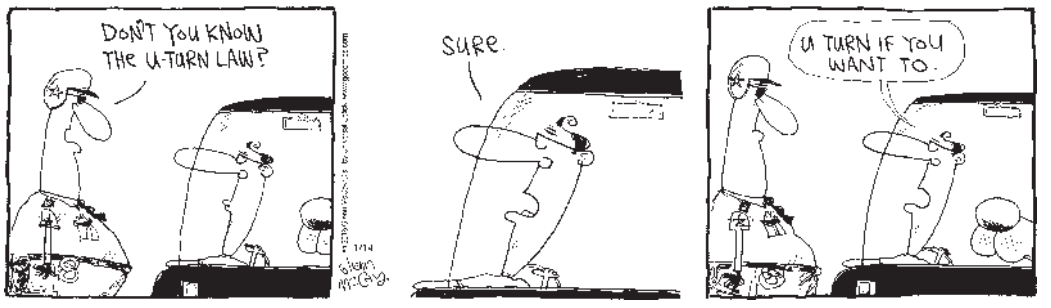
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I THINK I DID IT!
WHAT?
I FOUGHT OFF MY COLD WITH PMA.
PMA?
"POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE."
OH. YES. THAT'S BETTER.
BETTER THAN WHAT?
I THOUGHT IT STOOD FOR "PERSISTENT MELODRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENTS."

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

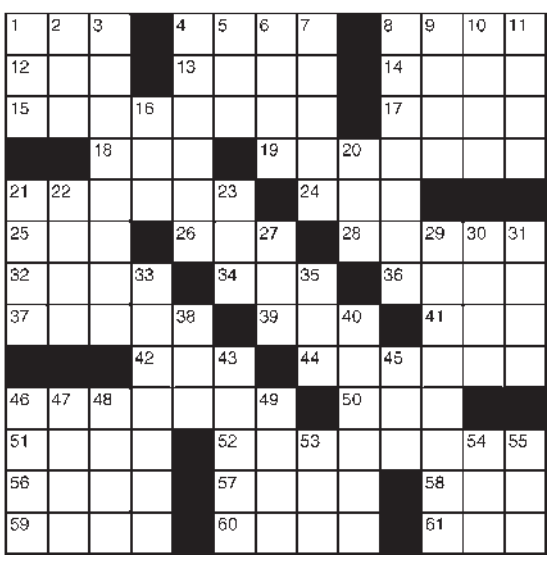
ACROSS
1 Passing craze
4 Gullible sorts
8 Barter
12 Notable time
13 Iraq neighbor
14 Sit tight
15 News story starter
17 Alan of "M*A*S*H"
18 Pre-holiday night
19 Uses mouth-wash
21 Havana denizens
24 Beer barrel
25 Musical Yoko
26 Scot's cap
28 Liveliness
32 Uproars
34 Wet dirt
36 Sudden attack
37 Arcade coin
39 Pantheon member
41 Hoosier St.
42 Taxi
44 Art of "The Honey-mooners"
46 Peanut candy
50 Small fry
51 Casino city
52 Modern
56 Hebrew month
57 Monthly payment
58 Sunbathe
59 Oodles
60 Greek "B"
61 Early bird?

DOWN
1 Nour-ished
2 Coach Parsegh-ian
3 Appoint-ment tracker
4 Mum
5 "Exodus" role
6 Hunger symptom
7 Sly one
8 He-man's walk
9 Barrier
10 Man Friday, e.g.
11 Sch. support-ers
16 A Gabor
20 Speed (up)
21 Paint layer
22 Nullify
23 Golf's Snead
27 Coffee cup
29 Bad weather contin-gency
30 Climbing plant
31 Whirl-pool
33 Districts
35 "What's up —?"
38 Turner of note
40 North or South —
43 Book jacket promo
45 Free (of)
46 Pesky one
47 Overhaul
48 — uproar (raging)
49 Duel weapon
53 Boom maker
54 Label
55 Coll. major

Solution time: 25 mins.

D	I	P		H	O	P	.		C	A	F	E
I	S	A		A	B	U	T		A	G	I	N
N	A	P		B	I	N	G	C	C	A	R	D
O	K	A	P	I			O	R	T			
			A	T	O	P		B	U	R	S	T
C	A	H	U	A	M	O	M		S	O	L	O
O	L	E		I	I	D	E	S		S	U	E
C	A	S	H		T	I	M	E	C	A	R	D
O	N	T	A	P		A	O	N	E			
			N	E	E			D	O	C	K	S
C	A	R	D	I	G	A	N	S		H	E	H
O	B	O	E		A	M	B	I		O	N	A
D	U	F	I		D	Y	A	N		W	O	W

Yesterday's answer 1-14



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dave Grohl, 47; Jason Bateman, 47; LL Cool J, 48; Holland Taylor, 73.

Happy Birthday: Good fortune will be yours if you don't give in to emotional blackmail or manipulative tactics. Staying focused on what will bring you the most in return and negotiating on your own behalf will be your ticket to success. Opportunities are apparent, but so are poor choices regarding money, health and legal matters. Be responsible for your own happiness and please yourself. Your numbers are 5, 14, 23, 31, 33, 46, 48.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Work behind the scenes to get as much done as possible. Now is not the time to spar with one of your colleagues or someone in an authoritative position. Take care of your responsibilities and keep moving forward. Romance will ease your stress. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Listen to any advice offered and put your own personal touch on the way you move forward. It's OK to be different or to explore new possibilities. What you engage in today will bring rewards far beyond your expectations. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't be too willing to put your responsibilities aside to help someone who is complaining. It's important to live up to your promises. Do your best to take care of your personal needs and leave some time to rejuvenate. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): A chance to try something new or do something different will improve your outlook and get you moving in an interesting direction that allows you to show off talents you didn't know you had. Embrace the future with optimism. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You'll have plenty to think about if you disagree with the people you deal with each day. Ask someone you trust for advice regarding a situation that has left you questioning your current status. A simple solution is likely eluding you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Get out and about. See what's going on in your neighborhood or plan a day trip. Doing things with children or friends will broaden your outlook and help you set better priorities. A change at home will affect your finances. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Your attention should be on yourself, your loved ones and making personal changes that will improve your life. Don't let situations at home escalate because someone is being forceful. Back away and let things settle down. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Share your ideas and emotional feelings. It's important to clear up any concerns before moving forward or making changes that will affect your life. A money matter, settlement or contract will escalate if you don't deal with it quickly. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't engage in something you can't finish. It's important to bring about alterations to the way you live if you want to avoid complaints and interference from someone who disagrees with your choices. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): An unusual or unexpected financial opportunity will develop. Use your experience and knowledge to orchestrate what you want to see unfold. You can raise your standard of living or change the way you invest in the future. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Put your efforts and attention toward your physical wellbeing, and do whatever it takes to improve your health. What you achieve will bring a positive response from someone you love. Change will be rewarding. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Be careful how you handle others. If you are too serious or negative, you will face the same in return. An honest but diplomatic approach when dealing with friends, relatives or your lover will help you avoid trouble. Focus on financial gains. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are insightful, inspirational and sensitive. You are persuasive and tactical.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			3		6			
1		8				7		3
	3	9				1	5	
		2	4		1	6		
		5	6		9	3		
	6	3				2	1	
7		4				9		5
			7		8			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	5	6	7	3	4	2	1	9
7	2	1	9	5	6	4	8	3
3	4	9	1	2	8	7	5	6
1	3	7	6	9	5	8	4	2
4	9	5	8	1	2	6	3	7
6	8	2	4	7	3	1	9	5
9	7	4	5	6	1	3	2	8
5	1	3	2	8	7	9	6	4
2	6	8	3	4	9	5	7	1

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

SINE WAVES Solution: 11 letters

T	F	L	Y	Y	T	U	D	I	O	S	U	N	I	S
N	R	A	E	A	D	E	T	F	I	H	S	Z	O	E
E	E	I	M	V	L	A	I	R	U	N	L	T	S	R
M	Q	T	G	P	A	E	N	E	N	I	S	R	S	I
E	U	A	P	O	L	R	D	E	G	R	E	E	A	E
C	E	P	O	D	N	I	T	H	G	B	I	H	B	S
A	N	S	S	E	N	O	T	E	M	A	G	G	Y	R
L	C	O	I	D	A	R	M	U	S	C	T	R	H	O
P	Y	U	T	A	H	D	N	E	D	V	O	I	I	T
S	L	N	I	T	L	N	V	N	T	E	A	S	V	C
I	L	D	O	I	A	U	A	A	H	R	P	L	I	E
D	L	O	N	T	N	B	M	T	N	E	Y	S	U	V
A	M	E	U	T	G	P	U	R	E	C	U	R	V	E
S	A	R	F	N	I	S	A	D	O	M	E	M	I	T
R	E	I	O	T	S	H	A	P	E	F	L	O	W	N

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Advance, Air, Amplitude, A Sin, Band, Bass, Curve, Delay, Displacement, Duty, Fields, Flow, Formula, Frequency, Game, Hertz, Left, Light, Linear, Music, Nature, Negative, Numbers, Position, Pure, Radio, Right, Run, Series, Shape, Shifted, Signal, Sine, Sinusoid, Smooth, Sound, Spatial, Speed, Theory, Time, Tones, Travel, Trigonometry, Value, Vectors

Yesterday's Answer: Pedal

To purchase the **WONDERWORD MILLENNIUM SERIES #1 or #2**, order online at: www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contains 100 puzzles.)

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1 General Manager (Accounting): $1,000-1,800/mo. 5 years of managerial experience required. Must have majored in accounting. 10 years of accounting experience required. Korean writing and speaking fluency required. Email resume to hps@hanmisaipan.com.

1 Cook (Korean cuisine): $6.05/hr. At least 1 year of professional cooking experience in Korean cuisine required. Email resume to wing@hanmisaipan.com.

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College Graduate or some college. Must be knowledgeable in taking down dictation/steno. Must be able to type 60 to 65 words per minute. Computer literate, knowledgeable in Microsoft software such as MS Word, MS Excel, MS Power point and Email. Job certifications on previous employment. Two years experience is also required.
Please send resume to:
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P.O. Box 500438, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950,
United States or call: 670 234-9675

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American Couples and Non-American Couples are seeking your help to fulfil their dream to have a child. If you are female between the ages of 21 and 40, have had at least one natural child birth, and are interested in learning more about being a surrogate, please contact Evelyn @ 322-0419. Compensation is over $22,000.

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US citizen preferred.
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Fax: 671-646-4908

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
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- Full-time with flexible working hours

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Saipan Tribune

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Interested applicants, please call Mr. Adonis Santos at 323-2916 for more information.

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- with 4 to 5 years experience
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Tel: 285-5354 or 285-4297

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DBA: CLUB MERMAID
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
(3) WAITRESS
2-3 years experience as a waitress in a Night Bar or an Entertainment Business.
OTHER QUALIFICATIONS:
- At least 21-25 years old with pleasing personality.
- Full Time with flexible working hours.
- Salary: $6.05/hr
- Preferably can speak Japanese language fluently.

PLEASE MAIL YOUR RESUME to PMB 697 Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950 or contact our Office at Tel. (670) 233-1545 between 2:30PM – 9:00PM

JAPAN ENTERPRISES CORP.
DBA CLUB MICRONESIA
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
(3) WAITRESS
2-3 years experience as a waitress in a Night Bar or an Entertainment Business.
Other Qualifications:
- At least 21-25 years old with pleasing personality.
- Full Time with flexible working hours.
- Salary: $6.05/hr
- Preferably can speak Japanese language fluently.

Please mail your resume to P.O. Box 502589, Saipan, MP 96950 or contact our Office at Tel. (670) 233-1545

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dba Design Florist/Cabrera Funeral
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All interested applicant must apply in person.
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- Attended a hemodialysis training program and management of hemodialysis inpatient and outpatient care
- At least four years hemodialysis experience and three years as a charge nurse in dialysis
- In-service training with Baxter Phoenix Machine
- Experience with Ameriwater Bicarbonate Distribution System
- Certification in Basic Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- English Language Skills – Proficient in verbal, written, and comprehension
- Must hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Must be flexible with time schedule

Interested applicants must submit their resume or pick up an application at St. Jude Renal Care Facility Inc., at Chalan Kiya, Saipan. Deadline to submit an application will be on Friday, January 22, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. For more information, please call (670) 234-2901 ext. 128.

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YANO Enterprises, Inc.
Kinpachi Japanese Restaurant
Cook (3): Must be experienced & skilled in preparing Japanese cuisine including but not limited to sushi, sashimi, & tempura. Can prepare all menu items according to quantity menus, must know cutting and preparation techniques for each type of fish used in sushi rolls as well as how to prepare rice, sauces and seasonal ingredients, must ensure that ingredients are fresh, colorful and always in stock, that the all-important knives are sharp and clean, and that all equipment is in working order. Must be able to maintain kitchen & observe safety & sanitary food handling practices as well as other related duties.
Additional Requirements: All applicants must be of good health and have a good moral character, must be able to follow grooming standards, must be able to provide required food handler health certificate, must be able to provide current police clearance, with reliable transportation and must agree to drug test. Must be willing to work on flexible hours, shifts, evening, holiday and weekends. Applicants of positions listed above are required to have a minimum of 6 months to a year experience. Applications can be picked up at Kinpachi Restaurant in Coral Tree Avenue, Garapan.
We are an equal opportunity employer. Qualified applicants will be considered. Applications can be picked up at Kinpachi Restaurant in Coral Tree Avenue, Garapan. Please no phone calls.

TINIAN CASINO GAMING CONTROL COMMISSION
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
PUBLIC NOTICE
Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission (TCGCC) hereby gives notice that it will hold a Special Meeting on Tuesday, January 19, 2016, at 2:00 p.m. at the TCGCC Conference Room.

AGENDA
I. **PRELIMINARY**
   a. Call to Order
   b. Roll Call
   c. Adoption of Agenda
II. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** [1]
III. **REPORTS**
   a. Chair's Report
   b. Executive Director's Report
IV. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. Legal Counsel's Contract of Attorney Janet H. King
V. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** [2]
VI. **MISCELLANEOUS/ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**
VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

[1] Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
[2] Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Commission may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

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WHATZIT Solution: Square dance

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ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
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Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

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Find today's solution in classified section

NFL approves Rams to LA, Chargers option to join

HOUSTON (AP)—The Rams are moving back to Los Angeles, maybe with company.

The San Diego Chargers and Oakland Raiders might end up staying put, although the leadership of both teams didn't come close to making that commitment Tuesday night. Or one of them could be headed to L.A., too.

A long day of votes and revotes ended with 30 of 32 NFL owners approving Rams owner Stan Kroenke's ambitious plan to move his team from St. Louis to the site of the old Hollywood Park racetrack in Inglewood, California, about 10 miles from downtown LA. The Chargers have a yearlong option to join the Rams, followed by the Raiders if the San Diego franchise declines.

The Raiders and Chargers had a competing proposal to share a new stadium in nearby Carson, but neither option got the 24 votes needed for approval. After another negotiating session in the afternoon, Kroenke's $1.8 billion project prevailed.

The decision ends the NFL's 21-year absence from the nation's second-largest media market.

"I often said over those 21 years what we need is a great facility," Commissioner Roger Goodell said at a news conference about 11 hours after the meetings began. "I think what happened over the last years is we had two outstanding opportunities, both of these stadium projects were outstanding."

AP
Football fans cheer for the return of the Rams to Los Angele,s on the site of the old Hollywood Park horse-racing track in Inglewood, Calif., on Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2016.

Chargers chairman Dean Spanos was asked if he intended to play in Los Angeles in 2016.

"I'm going to take a day off tomorrow I think," Spanos said. "This has really been excruciating for everyone. It's very difficult to say right now I'm going to do this or do that."

Oakland is still in debt from a renovation 20 years ago when the Raiders moved back from Los Angeles. City officials have said they won't seek help from taxpayers with a new stadium, and asked the NFL for more time to develop a project in a response to the Raiders' relocation plan. The NFL gave it to them.

"We'll see where the Raider nation ends up here," said owner Mark Davis, who was equally noncommittal in comments to reporters outside the news conference. "We'll be working really hard to find us a home. So for our fans and everything else, don't feel bad. We'll get it right."

Ray Perez, a 28-year-old Raiders fan from Sacramento who goes by the moniker Dr. Death, traveled to the Houston meeting in his usual Black Hole garb and was cautiously optimistic after hearing the news.

"I will not be completely, fully thrilled until the ink dries on paper and we know we're staying in Oakland in a new stadium," Perez said. "I'm very happy, very happy. But I'm not going to be overjoyed until we sign a stadium deal to keep the Raiders in Oakland with our own stadium."

The Chargers play 120 miles south of Inglewood in aging Qualcomm Stadium. The Raiders played in Los Angeles from 1982-94 and currently split a facility with baseball's Athletics, the last remaining combination stadium.

The Rams—based in the LA area from 1946-94—will likely have a temporary home at the Los Angeles Coliseum until the new stadium is ready in 2019. It's unclear where the Chargers would play if they move.

San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer says the city and county will negotiate with the Chargers, but "are not interested in a charade by the Chargers if they continue to pursue Los Angeles."

St. Louis had a plan for an open-air, $1.1 billion stadium along the Mississippi River north of the Gateway Arch to replace the Edward Jones Dome. But Kroenke mostly ignored the city's overtures, and Goodell said the requirement of at least $200 million from the NFL was double what league policy allowed.

Kroenke also has said St. Louis' economy makes it difficult for an NFL franchise to thrive there.

"We understand the emotions involved of our fans," he said. "We made a decision and worked long and hard at the various alternatives. When they didn't succeed, we worked this one to this point."

The last NFL franchise to move was the Houston Oilers—led by current Rams coach and California native Jeff Fisher—to Tennessee in 1997. The Raiders and Rams both left Los Angeles after the 1994 season.

"It is troubling that the league would allow for the relocation of a team when a home market has worked in good faith and presented a strong and viable proposal," Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon said. "We will review the NFL's decision thoroughly before determining what next steps to take."

Goodell offered the first signal the NFL might be intent on making a decision it delayed six weeks earlier in the Dallas area. Days before the Houston meeting, he issued a report to all 32 teams that deemed the venues in all three existing cities inadequate and questioned the stadium proposals.

The relocation agreement gives the Chargers and Raiders $100 million each if they build new stadiums in their current markets, but a stadium plan is required within a year.

The Rams also have to wait at least a year to negotiate naming rights on the new stadium unless they reach a deal with a second team before then.

"It's been going on for like two years that we've been working on this," said Houston owner Bob McNair, who beat out Los Angeles in a bid for an expansion franchise that debuted in 2002. "We're quite pleased with the outcome and look forward to the development of a real NFL campus out in Los Angeles."

Chargers must decide between Inglewood or San Diego

SAN DIEGO (AP)—The San Diego Chargers face a big decision: take the option to move to the Los Angeles area along with the Rams, or accept an extra $100 million from the NFL and try to repair their badly damaged relations with San Diego in working out a deal for a new stadium.

Team chairman Dean Spanos looked stunned at the decision Tuesday by fellow owners to let the Rams leave St. Louis and build a stadium in Inglewood.

There was a feeling the Chargers would make it to L.A. one way or another, either with the rival Oakland Raiders in a joint stadium they proposed to build in Carson, or with the Rams in Inglewood.

But after a day of negotiations in Houston, owners approved the Rams' move in a 30-2 vote, with a first option for San Diego to share the $1.8 billion stadium Rams owner Stan Kroenke is building in Inglewood.

Spanos said he will spend the next several weeks exploring his options. He described the process as "excruciating, for everyone."

"The goal from the start of this process was to create the options necessary to safeguard the future of the Chargers franchise while respecting the will of my fellow NFL owners," Spanos said in a statement.

The Chargers have time to try to get something done in San Diego, if they choose, although any deal would need approval by the voters in either June or November. That would require reconnecting with a fan base that loudly claimed it felt abandoned by Spanos' scorched-earth tactics, carried out by attorney Mark Fabiani, as the Chargers tried to position themselves to win the race to Los Angeles.

As rough as relations were with City Hall, the Chargers went 4-12 and missed the playoffs for the fifth time in six seasons.

The Chargers walked away from negotiations with the city and county in June, instead focusing on that stadium project in Carson.

San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer and County Supervisor Ron Roberts issued a pointed statement Tuesday evening.

"Today NFL owners rejected the Chargers' bid to move to Carson. If Mr. Spanos has a sincere interest in reaching a fair agreement in San Diego, we remain committed to negotiating in good faith. We are not interested in a charade by the Chargers if they continue to pursue Los Angeles."

The Chargers have been trying since 2002 to replace aging Qualcomm Stadium. The long-running stadium saga turned nasty in the last year as Fabiani fiercely opposed Faulconer's proposals to keep the team in San Diego.

The city and county have proposed a $350 million public contribution toward a $1.1 billion stadium. The city-county proposal calls for the Chargers to contribute $353 million with the NFL adding another $200 million in a loan. Naming rights could be credited toward the Chargers' portion.

Finances were never discussed during three brief negotiating sessions between the team and the city and county. Instead, the Chargers raised concerns with a hastily conducted environmental impact statement they felt could get tied up in court.

Faulconer's top political strategist, Jason Cabel Roe, said in October that if the Chargers resume negotiations, they need to come without Fabiani because he has no credibility with elected officials.

Roe reiterated that position Tuesday night.

"If the Chargers' organization decides to re-engage on our stadium proposal, they could demonstrate the sincerity by dumping Fabiani as their negotiator," Roe told The Associated Press.

The Chargers didn't comment on Roe's suggestion.

Rams move leaves St. Louis as two-time NFL loser

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Now St. Louis is a two-time NFL loser. Both times, it was about a stadium.

In 1988, the city lost the Cardinals to Phoenix over dithering about a new facility that team owner Bill Bidwill eventually got built in the desert.

This time, it can be blamed on a no-win lease that gave the Rams an out if the Edward Jones Dome wasn't deemed in the top one-quarter of the facilities in the league.

While Stan Kroenke relocates the franchise to Inglewood, California, with plans for a lavish stadium, it's back to the bricks for the task force—which has a $1 billion plan and fancy artists renderings for a riverfront stadium that could also house an MLS franchise, but no prospective tenants.

The task force said the decision "concludes a flawed process" and said it planned no "news events" the rest of the week.

Dave Peacock, co-head of task force, said in an impromptu conference call that the process was "more contemplated and contrived than I realized" and that it appeared "St. Louis never had a chance."

"We had aimed for a target, hit it, and they said, 'No, the target is over here.'"

Peacock concluded: "This is a byproduct of an owner who just didn't want to be here."

Attorney Bob Blitz, the other co-head of the task force, did not rule out legal action.

For now, the city that Kroenke harshly criticized for a lagging economy and has long been dissed as a "baseball town" is left with two professional teams.

"I thought the crowds were very good when I was here," said Dick Vermeil, who coached the Greatest Show on Turf team to the franchise's lone Super Bowl title in the 1999 season. "They were unbelievable when we turned the team around, and they were good when we were not going good."

During the Devils-Blues NHL telecast Tuesday night, St. Louis announcer John Kelly said simply, "Very disappointing news."

Cardinals general manager John Mozeliak said St. Louis was a "tremendous sports town."

"Historically, you put something out there people are proud of, they show up," Mozeliak said.

State and civic leaders who banded together in an effort to keep the Rams in town are feeling jilted.

Williams leads Lakers past Pelicans to end 4-game skid

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anthony Davis didn't suit up for New Orleans, and Kobe Bryant couldn't make it through the first half.

With the game's two biggest stars sidelined by injuries, the Los Angeles Lakers' young lineup capitalized for a promising win.

Lou Williams scored nine of his 19 points in the fourth quarter, and the Lakers rallied late to snap their four-game losing streak with a 95-91 victory over the Pelicans on Tuesday night.

After Julius Randle hit a go-ahead finger roll with 43 seconds left, Williams added a clutch running jumper with 18 seconds to play. Los Angeles hung on to win the meeting of the Western Conference's worst teams, surviving a back-and-forth fourth quarter for just its ninth win of the season.

"Young guys are starting to get a little resilient," Lakers coach Byron Scott said. "They're starting to learn. We've been saying that for the past couple of weeks. They're starting to grow."

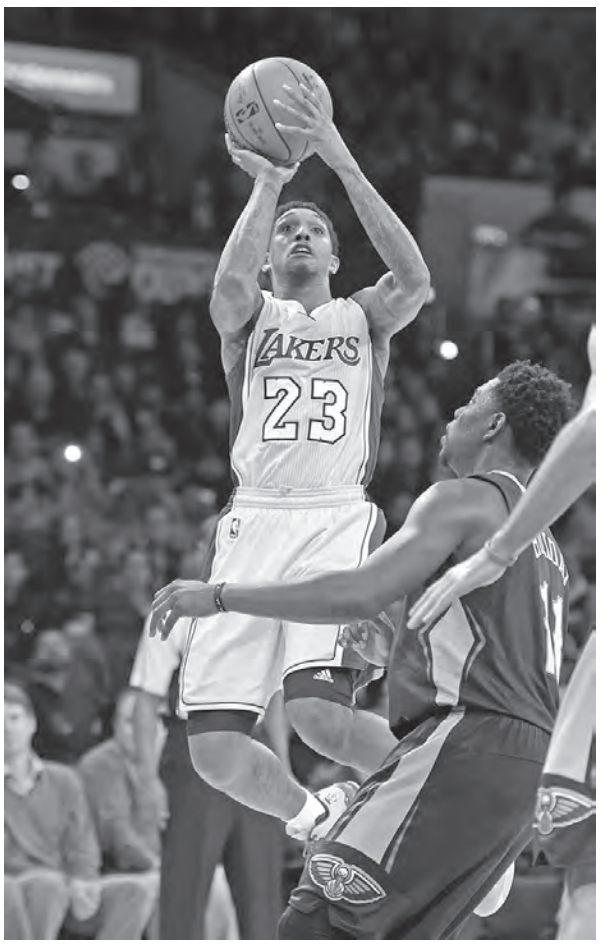
Jordan Clarkson scored 18 points for the Lakers, while D'Angelo Russell added 13 points after missing one game with a sprained ankle. The rookie put the Lakers ahead for the first time with a 3-pointer early in the fourth quarter.

Scott finished the game with Williams and four youngsters on court—although the group didn't include Russell, who acknowledged frustration. The Pelicans scored the next 10 points after Russell's go-ahead shot, but the Lakers eventually reclaimed the lead on Williams' jumper with 1:16 to play.

"We got stops down the stretch, picked up the pace and became a little more assertive," Williams said. "We've just got to be proud of the way we're growing. I feel like we're going in the right direction. I think we're going to turn the corner."

Tyreke Evans scored 21 points for the Pelicans, who lost their fourth straight and hit arguably the lowest point of their wildly disappointing season.

"You just have to decide if you are going to play hard every night and if we want to have a good team," New Orleans coach Alvin Gentry said. "That's the bottom line. It doesn't involve soul-searching. It involves looking in the mirror and being able to say, 'I gave the best effort that I could tonight.' That's not what we are getting."



AP

Los Angeles Lakers guard Louis Williams, left, shoots as New Orleans Pelicans guard Jrue Holiday defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2016, in Los Angeles.

Spurs 109, Pistons 99

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Tony Parker scored 31 points, LaMarcus Aldridge added 22 points and 13 rebounds, and San Antonio beat Detroit for its ninth straight victory.

Detroit had its three-game winning streak broken.

Manu Ginobili added 15 points while Tim Duncan had 14 points and nine rebounds for the Spurs, who return to San Antonio trying to extend their 31-game home winning streak Thursday against Cleveland.

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope led the Pistons with 25 points, while Andre Drummond added 17 points and 10 rebounds.

Knicks 120, Celtics 114

In New York, Kristaps Porzingis scored 26 points, Arron Afflalo had 20 of his 24 in the second half, and New York beat Boston.

Jerian Grant scored 10 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter and added eight assists in the best game of his rookie season as the Knicks held off the Celtics despite losing leading scorer Carmelo Anthony to a sprained right ankle seconds into the third quarter.

Isaiah Thomas had 34 points for the Celtics, who lost their fourth straight and fell to 19-19. Jae Crowder had 21.

Rockets 107, Grizzlies 91

In Memphis, Tennessee, James Harden scored 25 points, Dwight Howard added 17 points and 14 rebounds and Houston beat Memphis.

Terrence Jones finished with 20 points for Houston, 10 in the fourth quarter when the Rockets pulled away to win their fourth straight after the game was tied at 83.

Marc Gasol led Memphis with 20 points, while Tony Allen added 17. Courtney Lee finished with 16 and Mario Chalmers, Zach Randolph and Vince Carter all scored 10.

The Rockets connected on 18 of 35 from outside the arc compared to only 7 of 18 for Memphis.

Bucks 106, Bulls 101

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 29 points and 10 rebounds, and Milwaukee used a late rally to slip past Chicago.

Greg Monroe added 17 points and 12 rebounds for Milwaukee.

Jimmy Butler scored 30 points and Nikola Mirotic and Tony Snell added 17 apiece for Chicago, which used a 25-9 run late in the third quarter and early into the fourth to seemingly gain control of the game.

The Bulls, who have lost three straight, have scored 100 or more points for 12 consecutive games. But Chicago has allowed at least 100 points in eight of those games.

Thunder 101, Timberwolves 96

In Minneapolis, Kevin Durant shrugged off a slow start to finish with 30 points in Oklahoma City's victory over Minnesota.

Durant scored 12 straight for the Thunder in the final three minutes and also had seven rebounds.

Russell Westbrook added 22 points, 11 assists and seven rebounds to help the Thunder hold off a late charge from the struggling Wolves, one game after giving up a big lead to the Portland Trail Blazers. The Thunder made 9 of 22 3-pointers to cruise to their seventh win in nine games.

Zach LaVine broke out of a miserable slump with 21 points, nine rebounds and four assists. Shabazz Muhammad scored 20 points for the Timberwolves, who have lost seven straight games and 11 of their last 12.

Andrew Wiggins scored 20 points for Minnesota, which is 5-17 at home.

Pacers 116, Suns 97

In Indianapolis. Paul George had 21 points and seven rebounds, and Indiana pulled away in the fourth quarter to beat Phoenix.

Indiana outscored Phoenix 36-21 in the final period, with George scoring nine points. Monta Ellis had all of his 14 points in the second half.

George Hill added 20 points and five assists for the Pacers. CJ Miles scored 19 points off the bench and went 4 of 6 from behind the arc. Center Ian Mahinmi added 10 points and five rebounds.

Devin Booker and Mirza Teletovic both finished with 19 points for Phoenix, playing the second of a three-game road trip. Markieff Morris added 16.

Former Butler star Andrew Smith dies after battling cancer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Andrew Smith's basketball skills made him a fan favorite at Butler.

Teammates, coaches, family and friends always knew there was a lot more to Smith than that.

On Tuesday, the former Bulldogs star, who played in two national championship games, died at the age of 25 after a two-year battle with cancer. Athletic director Barry Collier spoke with Smith's family before issuing a joint statement with university President James Danko.

"What made Andrew special was the way that he genuinely cared for others," they said. "Within his large frame was an even larger heart. He is, was, and always will be a Bulldog."

Smith personified the school motto of living life the Butler way, working to get better each day and remaining selfless. His deep religious convictions gave him and his family the hope he could win this fight.

"The last two years he's been through a lot and he just never gave in," said an emotional Boston Celtics coach Brad Stevens, who coached Smith at Butler.

After he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of non-Hodgkin lymphoma early in 2014, Smith's wife, Samantha, started documenting her husband's battle by providing updates and inspirational messages on a blog called "Kicking Cancer with the Smiths." She continued writing even as Smith's condition worsened recently.

In mid-November, she announced Smith was having a bone marrow transplant. About three weeks later, she delivered the somber news that his body had rejected the transplant.

On Dec. 19, Smith attended Butler's game against Purdue in the Crossroads Classic and was cheered when he was shown on the big screen above the Indiana Pacers' home court. Last week, Smith's wife, parents and former college teammates began pleading for more prayers on social media and Stevens skipped the Celtics' game in Chicago to visit the Smiths.

"I was happy that I got a chance to say goodbye, and this is really about when you coach somebody, I mean you get a lot more out of coaching them than they do from you," Stevens said Tuesday before the Celtics' game in New York. "I could go on and on and it wouldn't do him justice.

"He was special, he was tough. Set a great example," Stevens added.

Samantha Smith posted a heartbreaking message Sunday to express how dire the situation was.

"I can't wrap my head around the fact that there is nothing left to do for Andrew except tell him how much I love him, hold his hand and be with him for every second we have left together," she wrote. "The doctors tell me death is imminent and that Andrew is going to die from this disease. There are no treatments, no clinical trials.there is nothing left to do. I struggle to grasp what they've told me and I spend my nights crying and moaning in pain as I think about losing the one I hold most dear and close to my heart - my husband."

The fact Smith was so ill was a stark contrast to the player so many fans watched grow up on a basketball court.

As a high school senior at Covenant Christian, Smith led the state of Indiana in rebounding. When the 6-foot-11 center arrived at Butler, he was considered a talented prospect who needed to fine-tune his game.

As a freshman, Smith played limited minutes after coming down with mononucleosis and enlarged lymph nodes. Early in his sophomore season, though, Smith won a starting job and quickly became the model of good health. He started 102 of his last 105 games, including the 2011 title game against Connecticut.

He finished his career with 1,147 points, 648 rebounds and two national championship appearances and played with some of Butler's best-known players - Gordon Hayward and Shelvin Mack, who went on to play in the NBA, and Matt Howard - before starting his own brief pro career in Europe.

Current Butler coach Chris Holtmann said Smith spent as much time as he could with the team last season and the players embraced getting to know him, making Tuesday a tough day for everyone.

"When I talk to Brad and those who were here with him, what they always bring up is the fact that he was tough, he made his teammates better and he was a good person," Holtmann said.

The Bulldogs plan to wear a patch on their jerseys in honor of Smith, and Holtmann said he plans to attend the funeral with at least some of his players.

Former teammates offered condolences and thoughts on Twitter, too.

"Devastated for Sam and to lose him so soon but also relief that he is no longer in pain," read a statement on Howard's Twitter account. "Thankful for our few years we had. Love you Drewski."

Smith made an indelible impact on Butler's program, too, including a memorable game-winning tip-in against Purdue in the 2011 Crossroads Classic.

"We saw the way Andrew fought on the basketball court and we saw the way he fought for his health," Danko and Collier said. "In both cases, we saw the best of Andrew Smith."

The man who grew up just outside Indianapolis, in Zionsville, stayed in town to attend college, became an academic All-American, eventually married his much shorter high-school sweetheart and survived after his heart stopped beating for roughly 20 minutes in July 2014.

"My heart breaks into a million pieces thinking of all who would lose so much if he goes—a friend, a son, a brother, a teammate, and an inspiration to us all," Samantha Smith wrote Sunday. "We would all lose so much because he has impacted every single person that he has ever come into contact with. His kindness is instantaneous to strangers and his caring nature and ever-gentle heart is felt by every person lucky enough to have any sort of relationship with him."

She added: "It is not lost on me how many care so deeply for Andrew. He's an easy one to love."

Ace Hardware, GPPC top foes in Emon Lodge caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Ace Hardware and GPPC joined the early winners list in the 2016 Emon Lodge No. 179 Brotherhood/IT&E Basketball League after downing separate foes last Sunday at the Civic Center Basketball Court.

GPPC edged 360 Restaurant in the first morning game, 74-68, while Ace Hardware dominated BSI in the second match, 71-58. The two games in the afternoon were rained-out, making GPPC and Ace Hardware only the third and fourth squads in the 11-team field to enter the win column. Mobil/JP World and Shirley's Coffee Shop were the first two teams to notch victories in the league after defeating MJD Enterprises, 94-74, and Armatech, 76-66, respectively, in the opening week last Jan. 3.

Ace Hardware prevailed in its debut match after getting off to a good start against BSI, one of the two teams sponsored by Best Sunshine International, Ltd.. Ace Hardware built a baker's dozen lead, 25-12, thanks to Jethro Cruz's 8 straight points off two triples and a layup midway in the opening quarter. Five other Ace Hardware players hit the board in the first frame to dictate the tempo of the game against the sluggish BSI crew, which was held to three field goals.

BSI picked up its scoring in the second canto to move within 9 at the break, 30-39, but Ace Hardware regained the double-digit advantage in the third, 56-46, after playing another balance offense. Ace Hardware kept going in the fourth to hand BSI a debut loss.

Sid Quan led Ace Hardware's win with his 20 points, while Cruz and Don Brennan contributed 16 and 12, respectively. Prince Factor paced BSI with his 20 markers.

In the first game, GPPC rode on Alex Ocampo and Randy Mungcal's hot hands in the first half to gain control of the match and leaned on Gerald Laguindam after the halftime break to withstand 360's rally.

GPPC opened a 42-32 advantage after the first half as Ocampo fired 18 of his 27 points in the opening 20 minutes of play and Mungcal added 14. GPPC then squandered the double-digit advantage in the second half, but still took the win with Laguindam stepping up and scoring 12 of his 16 markers in the last 20 minutes of the match.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
BSI's Chris Esteves watches Ace Hardware's Sid Quan go up for an uncontested layup during the second quarter of their game in the Emon Lodge/IT&E caging last Sunday at the Civic Center Basketball Court.

First Game

GPPC 74— Ocampo 27, Laguindam 16, Mungcal 16, R. Tagle 5, Corpuz 2, Norial 2, M. Tagle 2, Barron 2.

360 68 — Viray 18, Ashburn 18, Hernandez 10, Cabanas 8, Agbanlog 6, Gatdula 4, Pasnor 4.

Scoring by quarters: 14-19, 42-32, 55-51, 74-68.

Second Game

Ace Hardware 71—Quan 20, Cruz 16, Brennan 12, Camacho 7, Hammond 6, Chariton 5, Younis 5.

BSI 58 — Factor 20, Esteves 16, Colon 10, Miranda 7, Oyola 3, Enriquez 2.

Scoring by quarters: 25-12, 39-30, 56-46, 71-58.

NMSA to discuss further PGC fines

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Sports Association would discuss further the fines incurred by several member sports federations for their failure to participate in the 2015 Pacific Games in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea after submitting a numerical entry.

The Northern Marianas Athletics, Northern Marianas Islands Volleyball Association, CNMI Bodybuilding Federation, Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association, and the Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation are facing at least $2,000 in fines each.

Part III Protocol 7.9 of the Games Management Protocol under the PGC's charter states that "Pacific Games Association's which do not finally participate in one or more of the sports on the Games finals program despite having entered numerical entries, will be liable to a financial penalty of US$1,000 per sport payable to the Pacific Games Council and transferred to the Organizing Committee if it can prove a financial loss arising from the withdrawal of PGAs from particular sports."

The PGC sent a billing to NMSA, which president Michael A. White read during the group's monthly meeting last week.

NMITA, among the five sports associations, had the biggest fine with $4,000 for not sending a men's and women's teams. NMA, NMIVA, CBF, and NMITF were given $2,000 fines apiece.

NMITA president Jeff Race protested and said that he already sent information that they won't be sending a tennis team to the 15th edition of the quadrennial sporting event prior to the deadline of the numerical entries.

Officials of the other NMSA member associations also protested the fines and White said he will take up the issue with the PGC.

"We will discuss more about this in our next meeting. We're still looking into the matter," said White.

In other news, the longtime NMSA chief clarified, in a story that came out in yesterday's *Saipan Tribune* that they are planning to approach Bank of Hawaii to ask if there are any excess furniture that they would consider donating to the Commonwealth sports body.

White said Bank of Hawaii has not yet approached or told NMSA that they would be donating their furniture.

"I did not say that Bank of Hawaii had agreed to donate anything or was even considering donating anything. I stated simply that we were aware that the bank was downsizing and might have some excess furniture that we could use," said White.

"And that we were going to approach the bank to ask them what they might have available and whether they might consider donating some excess furniture to us," he ended.

Alamo, Homeboyz edge foes to remain on top

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

National Alamo Car Rental and the Jokers Homeboyz escaped with hard-earned 7-6 wins over separate opponents to remain on top of the Budweiser-Saipan Billiards Association Open 8-Ball Thursday League when action resumed last week.

No games were held in the Thursday League because of the holiday season as Dec. 24 and 31, Christmas and New Year's Eve, fell on Thursdays.

Alamo defeated the Jokers WildBoyz, while the Homeboyz edged lowly Jonny's Team SCS. The Wild Bill's Rack 'N' Roll also scored a 7-6 win over sister squad Wild Wild West.

Both matchups by the Alamo and WildBoyz were decided in the final Partner's 8-Ball event.

Alamo's Manny Mariano and Rodel Dela Cruz got the better of Ray Matsunaga and Randy Sablan to break a 6-6 tally.

Alamo jumped to a 5-1 lead, but the WildBoyz rallied back to take a 6-5 edge and moved a win away of wrapping up the contest.

Rey Hermogenes and Joseph Achas delivered for Alamo as they dispatched John Reyes and Sablan to force a deciding match with Mariano and Dela Cruz wrapping up the victory.

It was almost the same result in the Homeboyz-SCS match with the former also needing Nolan Cultura and Rick Elefante's triumph over Bryan Fabre and James Villacrucis to seal the win.

Alamo continues to hold the top ranking with a 55-36 record followed closely by the 54-37 mark of the Homeboyz. The WildBoyz (49-42), Wild Wild West (41-50), Rack 'N' Roll (40-51), and Team SCS (34-57) complete the standings.

In last week's Tuesday League, the Jokers IT&E Voyagers pulled away from the rest of the pack after an 11-2 decision over the fellow Jokers-backed squad Destroyers.

The Voyagers now have an 82-48 slate or 15 wins ahead of the 67-63 mar of the Jokers Docomo Hustlers, an 8-5 loser to the Jonny's Titans.

The Destroyers dropped to 64-66, while the Jokers StraightBlackBall are fourth with a 62-68 standing. The Titans (61-69) and the Jonny's Crazy 8 (54-76) are the other squads competing in this season's Tuesday Open 8-Ball League.

The Titans trounced the Hustlers, 8-5, and the Crazy 8 nipped the StraighBlackBall, 7-6, in the other matches.

MJD

From Page 28

but another short jumper from Tabora brought MJD's lead back to double-digit, 100-90. GMJ/IKKI was left with 1:15 to overhaul the deficit and it ran out of time and enough shots, as only Jun Pantaleon scored for the squad in the closing minute of the match, while MJD got one more short jumper from Jo Parcotillo and a split from Mungcal.

Mungcal was one of the four MJD players to finish in twin digits in their semis win against GMJ/IKKI with his 18 points. Tabora led the finalist with his 40 points, while Jun Alipio and Ocampo contributed 19 and 11, respectively.

Binuya paced GMJ/IKKI, firing 20, Fradel Sedillo chipped in 18, and Pantaleon tallied 15.

Sedillo waxed hot early, knocking in 10 points in the first quarter to lift GMJ/IKKI to a 26-24 lead. Team captain Marlon Sison also found his target in the opening canto, hitting two triples. He did not play in the entire fourth quarter, as he was visibly frustrated with a couple of calls in the closing minutes of the third period.

He was slapped with a technical foul after he threw the ball in an inbound play from their backcourt in protest of a what he believed should have been a 3-second violation charged to MJD. In earlier parts of the game, the opposing teams had their share of complains, causing some delays in the semis match. Tabora canned the technical free throw off Sison's infraction and MJD went on to score 5 more points as GMJ/IKKI momentarily lost focus in the game and committed turnovers.

A buzzer-beating jumper from Dennis Cortez gave GMJ/IKKI a break, but MJD still had the lead after the third period, 78-73, and never looked back as the first finalist consistently hit jumpers in the final canto to widen the gap.

MJD will face in the finals the winner in the other semis pairing between Armatech and VM Production. The second semis match was played last night and results will be reported in *Saipan Tribune*'s Friday edition.

MJD 103 —Tabora 40, Alipio 19, Mungcal 18, Ocampo 11, De Guzman 6, Parcotillo 4, Vargas 2, Rosario 2,

GMJ/IKKI 92 — Binuya 20, Sedillo 18, Pantaleon 15, Dizon 11, Sison 9, Cortez 6, Guiang 6, Galulu 4, Montano 3.

Scoring by quarters: 24-26, 52-50, 78-73, 103-92.

ATHLETICS

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community's interest in rugby.

Sensei Eiichi Ishiguro is the president of the Northern Mariana Islands Karatedo Federation under where he teaches a number of students in Garapan.

There were previous athletes and practitioners of boxing and judo but they became inactive after a few years.

Organizers of the 2017 Mini Games has also pushed back the dates from the summer to Dec. 2 to 14 to give them more time to renovate and improve the facilities and venues damaged by Cyclone Pam in March last year.

HERAS

From Page 28

to march into the semifinals. In the Final Four, Miyawaki stunned another seeded player in the main draw after outclassing No. 8 Eilis Kruger, 7-5, 6-4, to enter the finale against the third-ranked Emily Ioannou. Ioannou went on to snap Miyawaki's streak with a 6-1, 6-2 victory in the title match.

Miyawaki also played in the doubles with Tahiti's Lea Vainui Lamorelle and they made it to the quarterfinals after prevailing against Clare D'Alessandro and Lara Wighton, 6-1, 6-0. Heras, on the other hand, partnered with Samoa's Anasis Saipele and they finished second in the four-squad, round-robin contest behind the Fiji pair of Kumar and Ruby Coffin.

Heras and Saipele had a 2-1 record in the doubles, winning against Lewis and Julia Ramos, 6-3, 6-3, and versus Triggs and Annaliese Quarisa, 7-5, 6-2. The CNMI-Samoa tandem fell to the Fiji duo, 4-6, 4-6.

The 2016 Commercial Club Margaret Court Cup was one of the two tournaments Heras and Miyawaki were scheduled to compete in. Their second and last event in the Land Down Under is the 2016 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships in Wodonga and it started yesterday. Result will be reported in *Saipan Tribune*'s Friday edition.

2015-2016 NMISF Open Swim Meet

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Saipan Swim Club's Akira Kadokura does the butterfly stroke of the 200m individual medley race in the 2015-2016 NMISF Open Swim Meet held last Saturday at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

Tsunami Saipan's Aika Watanabe negotiates the first of the two-lap 100m backstroke event.

A swimmer gasps for air during the 50m freestyle race.

Tsunami Saipan's Isaiah Aleksenko checks his time in the 50m freestyle race.

Saipan Swim Club's Jin Ju Thompson competes in the 100m freestyle event.

Tsunami Saipan's Anthony Camacho-Deleon Guerrero nears completion of the 50m backstroke event.

Swimmers get ready for the start of the 50m backstroke event.

Saipan Swim Club's Jinie Thompson and two other swimmers jump from the starting block to race in the 200m freestyle event.

Saipan Swim Club coach Jacoby Winkfield talks to the swimmers after their respective races.

NFL approves Rams to LA, Chargers option to join

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Sports

Williams leads Lakers past Pelicans to end 4-game skid

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Heras wins; Miyawaki makes finals

OCEANIA TENNIS
The CNMI's Isabel Heras, standing right, and Malika Miyawaki, center kneeling, join the members of the GSDF Pacific Oceania Touring Team for a group photo before playing in the 2016 Commercial Club Margaret Court Cup at the Albury Grasscourts in Albury, New South Wales, Australia, last weekend.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior players Malika Miyawaki and Isabel Heras both advanced to the finals of the consolation draw of their respective divisions in the 2016 Commercial Club Margaret Court Cup held at the Albury Grasscourts in Albury, New South Wales, Australia.

Heras marched into the finals of the girls U16 consolation draw and earned two wins to rule the group. She swept Jovana Jovic in the semifinals, 6-2, 6-4, and then had a similar two-set victory against Alison Triggs, 6-3, 6-1, last Tuesday to bag the championship in the consolation bracket.

Earlier, the Commonwealth player lost her opening match in the main draw against Kelsey Lewis. Heras dropped the first set, 4-6, but forced a deciding third set with an impressive 6-1 win in the second. In the rubber, the Saipan Community School student engaged Lewis in a back and forth game before the latter pulled off a tough 7-5 win.

Heras' fellow players from the Grand Slam Development Fund's Pacific Oceania Touring Team, Vienna Kumar of Fiji, won the main draw after posting an upset against top-ranked Emmy Lappel in the finals, 6-2, 6-1.

Meanwhile, Heras' CNMI teammate Miyawaki also barged into the finals of the girls U14 singles consolation draw.

Miyawaki, who bowed to Ella Fraser in the opening round of the girls U14 singles main draw, 0-6, 0-3, won her next three games—including two matches against seeded players—to earn a slot to the championship round.

The Commonwealth started her string of victories with a 6-4, 6-1 triumph over Louisa Parkinson. Next up for Miyawaki was the sixth-ranked Imogen Cameron and the former recorded a 6-1, 6-4 win

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MJD takes first finals seat

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

MJD Enterprises secured the first finals berth in the masters division of the 2015 San Antonio Community Action Network Basketball League after eliminating GMJ/IKKI Wholesale, 103-92, last Tuesday at the San Antonio court.

MJD peppered GMJ/IKKI with perimeter jumpers in the fourth quarter to gain cushion after the opposing teams played neck-and-neck in the first three periods.

Jun Tabora, Randy Mungcal, and Alex Ocampo teamed up in short 10-4 run capped by the latter's banked 10-footer to give MJD its biggest lead in the match, 98-86, down to the last two minutes of the match.

Back-to-back baskets from Robert Guiang and Marlon Binuya kept GMJ/IKKI in the game, 90-98,

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
MJD Enterprises' Jorge De Guzman lets go of a scoop shot in front of two GMJ/IKKI Wholesale defenders during the fourth quarter of their semis game in the masters division of the San Antonio caging last Tuesday at the San Antonio court.

Athletics, golf to represent NMI in '17 Mini Games

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Only athletics and golf will be sending teams to the 2017 Pacific Mini Games in Port Vila, Vanuatu with both associations informing the Northern Marianas Sports Association of their plan during the group's monthly meeting last week at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room.

NMA officials, led by secretary general Robin Sapong and athletics coach Eli Rangamar, and golf representative Tony Rogolifoi said their respective groups would be competing in the two-week long sporting conclave after being asked by NMSA president Michael A. White.

Sapong

The CNMI has no official golf federation and players are scattered in a number of groups like the Amigos Golf Club, CNMI Women's Golf Association, FilTaga, Korean Golf Association, Marianas Golf Association, Refaluwasch Golf Association, and the Saipan Golfers Association.

Rogolifoi, who is also the NMSA executive director, is a member of RGA with some of its members representing the CNMI in last year's Pacific Games in Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea.

NMA, Sapong and Rangamar said, will have two male and female runners and one coach while golf, according to Rogolifoi, is interested in sending a five-member men's team with one coach while he is not sure of a women's squad.

Beach volleyball, football (soccer), tennis, and weightlifting are the other sports to be held in Vanuatu, which the CNMI has an existing federation or group.

The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association, Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, and Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association will not be sending athletes, while weightlifting has been inactive since bringing home 12 medals in the 2014 Micronesian Games in Pohnpei.

Rugby, archery boxing, cricket, judo, karate, and netball are the other sports to be played in the 2017 competition.

World University Archery Championship veteran Rachel Bouchillon is planning to introduce the sport here on the island, while Air Force reservist Stanley Iakopo is trying to revive the

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